

I.A.P. Rapporten

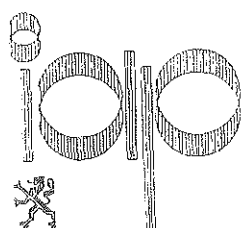
2

38/066

I.A.P. Rapporten

uitgegeven door / edited by

Prof. Dr. Guy De Boe





Death and Burial in Medieval Europe

Papers of the 'Medieval Europe Brugge 1997' Conference
Volume 2

edited by
Guy De Boe & Frans Verhaeghe

I.A.P. Rapporten 2

Zellik
1997

Een uitgave van het

Published by the

**Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium
Institute for the Archaeological Heritage**

Wetenschappelijke instelling van de

Scientific Institution of the

Vlaamse Gemeenschap

Departement Leefmilieu en Infrastructuur
Administratie Ruimtelijke Ordening, Huisvesting
en Monumenten en Landschappen

Flemish Community

Department of the Environment and Infrastructure
Administration of Town Planning, Housing
and Monuments and Landscapes

Doornveld

Industrie Asse 3 nr. 11, Bus 30

B -1731 Zellik - Asse

Tel: (02) 463.13.33 (- 32 2 463 13 33)

Fax: (02) 463.19.51 (- 32 2 463 19 51)

DTP: Arpuco.

Secr.: M. Lauwaert & S. Van de Voorde.

ISSN 1372-0007

ISBN 90-75230-03-6

D/1997/6024/2

was organized by
werd georganiseerd door
fut organisée par
wurde veranstaltet von

Gisela Grupe
Willy Dezuttere

PREFACE

Death and some form of burial are common to all humankind and the very nature of the disposal of human remains as well as the behavioural patterns – social, economic, political and even environmental – linked with this important passage in human life makes it a subject of direct interest to archaeology. Burials and cemeteries have long been a focal point of interest of archaeologists specializing in the early Middle Ages. This situation is partly explained by the historical development of (medieval) archaeology with its attention for those periods which are less well documented in the traditional, *i.e.* written, 'historical' sources. In a number of cases, the presence of rich and varied grave goods – as opposed to most later burials – equally played a part. This helps to understand why in Europe, the explicitly archaeological study of later medieval burials and cemeteries is a rather recent development. But it can reasonably be argued that because of its very nature and specific potential, archaeology – including its partner disciplines – should not submit to chronological limitations: the whole range of the human material past deserves suitable attention precisely because it can inform us about real-life situations and patterns as opposed to (and even as a complement of) the specific perceptions provided by other sources. This certainly applies to the study of death and burial as well as to all other components of medieval and later societies.

The present volume offers a collection of pre-printed papers related to the world of medieval and later death and burial. These papers were presented on the occasion of the international conference on medieval and later archaeology MEDIEVAL EUROPE BRUGGE 1997 which took place in Brugge, Belgium, on 1 through 4 October 1997. A number of them was presented and debated during the sessions of section 02, under the general title *Death and burial · Le monde de la mort · Tod und Begräbnis · De wereld van de dood*, organized by Gisela Grupe (Ludwig-Maxi-

milians-Universität, München) and Willy Dezuttere (City of Bruges). Unfortunately, quite a few contributors to this section did submit a text in time for inclusion in the present volume. In addition, cemeteries played an important part in the development and spatial organization of specific categories of buildings such as churches and monasteries as well of settlements, be they towns or villages. Similarly, because of the fact that burials and cemeteries touch upon so many other aspects of spiritual and material life and society, they cannot always easily be divorced from other topics, notably art and symbolism, religion and belief, material culture, trade and exchange, and environment, not to forget the methodological and interpretative issues they raise. Some of the contributions presented in the context of the other sections therefore also have a (mainly indirect) bear on the theme of death and burial. Section 02, however, brought together those contributions which focus very explicitly and directly on burials and cemeteries.

All this explains why the general structure and the contents of the present volume do not conform exactly to the programme of the conference. It has been organized keeping in mind both the complexity of the subject and the general lines of the structure of section 02 of the conference. This means that the contributions in the present volume have more or less been grouped according to the following topics:

- A special subsession of the conference was devoted to what is known about the death and burial of children and the two texts available for the present volume constitute the first subsection.
- Burials and cemeteries being imbued with all kinds of social behavioural patterns related not only to religion and belief but also to social representation and status – all of these being strongly intertwined and generally impossible to dissociate or isolate from one another – the second subsection groups the papers concerned with aspects of religion, ritual, repre-

sentation and social status. Some of these address some of the issues in a more general way and others focus on specific sites but pay much attention to the topics in question.

- Burials and cemeteries offer important information related to demography, physical anthropology, and palaeopathology and the three papers available relevant to those issues have been brought together under the heading archaeometry and pathology. In passing, it may be mentioned that at the conference, a number of posters emphasized the importance of the partner disciplines, particularly of physical anthropology, pathology and archaeometry (H. Bruchhaus, Chr. Herrmann, T. Pfützner & K. Vollandt, *Dental abrasion, diseases of the parodontium and caries in medieval populations of the Middle-Elbe-Saale-region*; H. Bruchhaus, A. Heiland & Chr. Herrmann, *Degenerative diseases in medieval populations of the Middle-Elbe-Saale-region*; H. Bruchhaus, O. Pridöhl & Chr. Herrmann, *Traumatic impacts in medieval populations of the Middle-Elbe-Saale-region*; Jacques Evin, Christine Oberlin & Gabrielle Demians d'Archimbaud, *Application de la méthode de datation par le radiocarbone à l'étude des nécropoles médiévales*; L. Finke & H. Bruchhaus, *Demographic*

aspects of early medieval populations of the Middle-Elbe-Saale-region; L. Finke, S. Birkenbeil Chr. Herrmann, *Traumatic impacts in early medieval populations of the Middle-Elbe-Saale-region*.

- Finally, a number of papers discussed specific sites and their significance and/or potential for many of the above-mentioned topics. These have been grouped in a subsection titled 'Life and death: site-related studies'.

Of necessity, the papers are rather short and the volume of course does not do total justice to the many excavations and the wealth of other types of research work which have been carried out on burials and cemeteries, particularly in Europe, over the past few years. Nor does it provide a complete overview of the results attained and knowledge acquired. Nevertheless, the 17 papers included in the present volume provide a good idea of the potential of this particular field of research, emphasizing at the same time the complexity and many possible meanings of an inescapable passage in the human life trajectory, a passage which was much more present in the perceptions, in the social strategies and in the material world of medieval and early modern people than it is in our world.

Frans Verhaeghe & Guy De Boe

**Jenseitsvorstellungen im Mittelalter:
die Wiederbelebung von totgeborenen Kindern.
Archäologische und anthropologische Untersuchungen im
Marienwallfahrtszentrum von Oberbüren im Kanton Bern/Schweiz**

Im Spätmittelalter gab es im westlichen Bereich des Bistums Konstanz einen Wallfahrtsort besonderer Art, der zugleich zu einem der bekanntesten der Schweiz zählte. In Oberbüren, einem noch heute ländlichen – abseits des städtischen Berns – gelegenen Flecken, konnten nämlich totgeborene Kinder angeblich für kurze Zeit wieder zum Leben erweckt werden. Im Zuge der Reformation wurden Kirche und dazugehörige Bauten dem Erdboden gleichgemacht. Es blieben keinerlei oberflächlichen Zeugnisse übrig; das einst so heilsträchtige Gelände wurde zu Acker- und Wiesland. Einzig der Flurname „Chilchmatt“ und der nahe vorbeiführende „Kirchweg“ überdauerten die Jahrhunderte.

Ausgangslage der archäologischen Untersuchungen

Auf der „Chilchmatt“, in deren Boden man die Überreste des Wallfahrtszentrums am ehesten vermuten durfte, wurden im Jahre 1992 vom Archäologischen Dienst des Kantons Bern erste Sondagen durchgeführt. Die geplante Überbauung des ganzen Hügels machte dies nötig. Diese Voruntersuchungen bestätigten die Vermutung, dass die Chilchmatt dem Standort der ehemaligen Marienkapelle entspricht. In den vergangenen fünf Jahren sind nun mehr als zwei Drittel der fundträchtigen Fläche (rund 3.500 m²) freigelegt, und bereits heute stellen wir aus archäologischer und anthropologischer Sicht einen reichen Fundus fest.

Gegenwärtiger Grabungsbefund

Die Befunde zeigen, dass die Geschichte von Oberbüren nicht erst im Spätmittelalter beginnt, wie aufgrund der Überlieferungen angenommen werden konnte. In chronologischer Auflistung sind folgende Hauptstrukturen belegt (Archäologische Befunde Dr. Daniel Gutscher/ADB, Abb. 1):

Eine erste Belegung in der späteren Bronzezeit (um 1200 und 1000 v. Chr.) ist durch Pfostenlöcher und Gruben nachgewiesen.

Aus römischer Zeit stammen Reste der folgenden Besiedlung. Schmale Mauern umreissen den Grundriss eines Bauwerks, wobei noch zu entscheiden ist, ob es sich um einen Gutshof oder um eine Anlage anderer Funktion handelte.

Die römische Anlage muss mindestens als Ruine noch sichtbar gewesen sein, als in ihrem Umfeld ein Reihengräberfeld angelegt wurde. Seine Anfänge liegen vermutlich im späteren Frühmittelalter; eine eindeutige Einordnung kann aber erst nach weiteren Untersuchungen vorgenommen werden. Ebenso ungewiss bleibt vorderhand, ob zu diesem Gräberfeld, auf dem Männer, Frauen und Kinder verschiedenen Alters (jedoch nur wenige Neugeborene) begraben worden waren, auch ein Kirchenbau gehörte.

Als weitere wichtige Entdeckung ist die Existenz eines mittelalterlichen Bauernhofes im südlichen Bereich der Gräberfeldes zu werten. Gruben deuten auf Speicher für die Vorratshaltung von Lebensmitteln, Steinfundamente auf ein kleines Gebäude (Stall?). Der Hof dürfte nach der geborgenen Keramik im 13./14. Jahrhundert bewirtschaftet worden sein.

Im 13./14. Jahrhundert folgt die erste Kapelle, die durch ihre Nordseite und den Turm gefasst ist.

Die Wallfahrtskirche mit dem schriftlich überlieferten Weihedatum von 1470 bildet das letzte Glied in der Kette. Diese Anlage ist mit ihrer Länge von knapp 40 m eine der grössten spätgotischen Kirchenbauten im Herrschaftsgebiet des Standes Bern, nur klar vom Berner Münster übertroffen. Indirekt beleuchtet dieser Befund den zunehmenden Ruf des Wallfahrtsortes. Um die neue Kapelle schüttete man eine durch hohe Stützmauern gesicherte Terrasse auf, welche die Anlage von weit her sichtbar emporragen liess. Die am östlichen Fuss der Terrasse gefundenen Strukturen werden als Brunnenanlage interpretiert. Zu dieser Kirche gehören nun ebenfalls Bestattungen, darunter vor allem die Totgeburten, die von den Wallfahrern hierher gebracht worden waren.

Auf der Südseite der Wallfahrtskapelle wurde ein grosses Gebäude nachgewiesen, welches die Kaplane beherbergt haben dürfte. Auch wenn der aufgehende Bestand, den man sich mit plastisch geschmückten

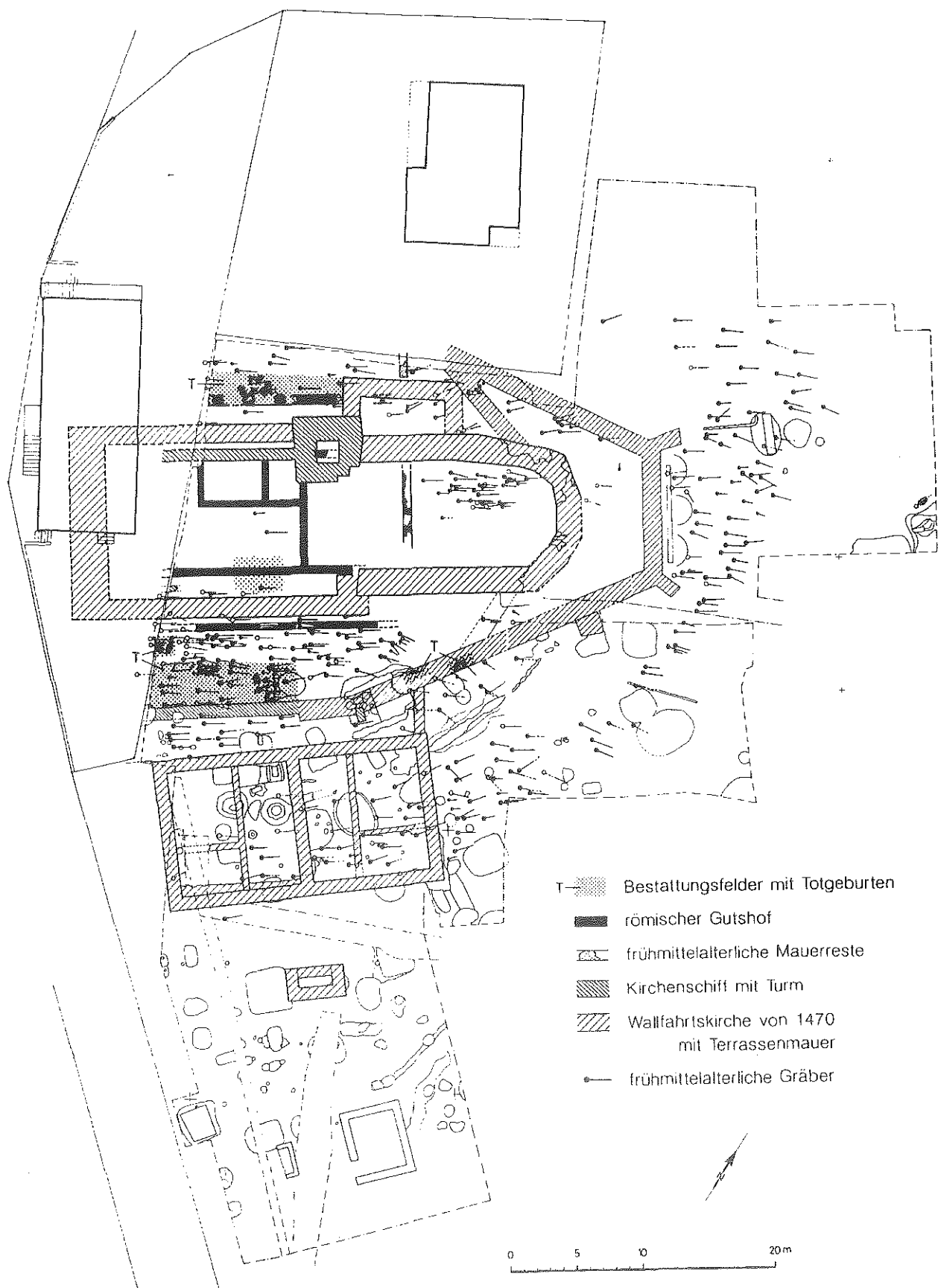


Abb. 1. - Aktueller Stand der Ausgrabung in Oberbüren. „Totgeburten“ wurden auf der Nord- und der Südseite der Wallfahrtskirche sowie in den geleerten Fundamentgruben der Umfassungsmauer gefunden (Plan ADB).

Eingängen und Fenstern vorstellen darf, verschwunden ist, geben die Ausmasse dieses Gebäudes einen Hinweis auf die finanziellen Möglichkeiten, welche sich aus den mit der Wallfahrtskapelle verbundenen Spenden ergeben haben.

Mit der Einführung der Reformation erfolgte ab 1528 der Abbruch der Kirche und der dazugehörigen Anlagen. Wie sprichwörtlich man dem Geheiss, das Gotteshaus zu schleifen, nachgekommen war, veranschaulichen die geleerten Fundamentgruben. Offensichtlich beseitigte man auch alle Spuren der ehemaligen Ausstattung, wie die geringe Zahl der gefundenen Objekte zeigt.

Quellenlage

In der schriftlichen Überlieferung wird 1302 eine „capelle in Oberburon“ erstmals ausdrücklich genannt. Überliefert ist zudem der Neubau aus der Zeit um 1470, wozu im gesamten Bistum Konstanz eine Kollekte veranstaltet worden war. Ferner wissen wir, dass sich eine Bruderschaft um den Unterhalt und die zahlreichen Messen in der Kapelle kümmerte. Über die bauliche Organisation vor Ort schweigen sich die Schriftquellen dagegen aus – zur Rekonstruktion dieser Realität ist nun die archäologische Forschung gefordert. Besser unterrichtet sind wir über die Tätigkeiten im Umfeld der Wallfahrt und zwar aus einem Brief des Bischofs Otto von Konstanz, der später noch zur Sprache kommen muss.

Die Wunder und ihre Folgen

Wundertaten, welche sich in der Marienkapelle ab ungefähr 1482 ereigneten, brachten Oberbüren in kurzer Zeit einen Ruf weit über unsere Region hinaus.

Welcher Art waren nun diese Wunder, die im letzten Viertel des 15. Jahrhunderts geschahen und die die Kapelle mit dem Marienbild in kurzer Zeit zu einer bekannten Gnadenstätte der Jungfrau Maria machen sollten?

Ein primärer Auslöser war ein Kirchendieb, der zum Ertränken in die Aare geworfen worden war. Entgegen jeder Vorhersage tauchte dieser wohlbehalten wieder aus den Fluten auf. In der Hand hielt er einen grünen Zweig, den ihm angeblich die Muttergottes von Oberbüren als Zeichen der Errettung gegeben habe. Dieses Wunder löste einen wahren Sturm auf Oberbüren aus, wobei die Dankeswallfahrt des Kirchendiebs nach Rom für die rasche Verbreitung der Kunde von den Wundertaten weit über die Grenzen hinaus sorgte. Das wundertätige Marienbild half nicht nur gegen „not vom wasser“, sondern es verhalf

auch zur Wiedererweckung totgeborener oder sonst ungetauft verstorbener Kinder.

Der Andrang an diese Gnadenstätte spiegelt sich in den erwirtschafteten Geldsummen wider: Waren es im Jahre 1482 erst 534 Pfund, soll die Summe 1528 bereits auf über 30'000 Pfund angestiegen sein. Ein Bruderschaftsrodel enthält um das Jahr 1500 über 1250 Namen, darunter diejenigen bedeutender Zeitgenossen aus Politik und Wissenschaft. Die höchste Stufe kirchlicher Ehren erlangte Oberbüren im Jahre 1512 mit dem Recht, Ablässe verkaufen zu dürfen. Es war zu befürchten, dass der Ruhm Oberbürens das etablierte Kloster Einsiedeln – ebenfalls zum Bistum Konstanz gehörend – in den Schatten stellen könnte. In dieser Situation wandte sich der Bischof von Konstanz um das Jahr 1486 mit einem Bericht an den Papst mit der Bitte, die Geschehnisse an dieser Wunderstätte zu untersuchen.

Für uns heute ist diese Quelle von grösster Bedeutung – allerdings ist vorerst zu fragen: Was an diesen Geschehnissen ist Legende, was Wirklichkeit?

Weshalb eine Wallfahrt mit Totgeburten?

Der Grund, weshalb es zu diesen Wallfahrten mit toten Kindern kam, liegt kurz gesagt darin, dass ein totgeborenes Kind ungetauft war und damit nicht zu den Christen, sondern zu den Heiden zählte. Die mittelalterliche Glaubensauffassung ging davon aus, dass ein Kind in Sünde zur Welt komme und deshalb von der Sünde seiner Empfängnis und der Erbsünde gereinigt werden müsse. Kirchenrechtlich gesehen durfte ein ungetauftes Kind nicht in geweihtem Boden, also christlich begraben werden. Nach einer Vorschrift aus dem 13. Jahrhundert stand ihm in der Regel ein Platz ausserhalb des Friedhofs zu („*Locus secretus*“).

Gemäss spätmittelalterlicher Jenseitsvorstellungen kamen diese Ungetauften eine Art Vorhölle für Kinder, in den *Limbus puerorum*. An diesem intermediären Ort waren diese Ungetauften nicht fixiert, wie die Seelen im Himmel oder in der Hölle. Hatten die Seelen im Fegefeuer die frohe Aussicht, nach dem Abbüßen ihrer Sünden in den Himmel einzugehen, galt dies nicht für die Kinder im *Limbus*. Sie hatten keine Chance, je erlöst zu werden.

Dieses Schicksal muss den spätmittelalterlichen Menschen stark beschäftigt haben – man kann dies an der grossen Zahl der überlieferten Vorstellungen ermessen: Man glaubte, ein solches Kind werde nicht selig, käme in den Limbus oder geistere als unerlöste Seele umher. Ein Ungetauftes galt zudem als bedrohlich: Es konnte den Lebenden Schaden zufügen (Seuchen, Unwetter u.ä.). Besonders die Eltern solcher Kinder kamen in eine schwierige Lage, da man sie

verantwortlich machen konnte für allerlei Unglücksfälle oder Notlagen. Die Ungetauften zählen auch zum Kreis der potentiellen Wiedergänger: Kurz gefasst: Sie nahmen eine ambivalente Stellung ein. Ungetaufte Kinder waren nicht nur gefährdet – sondern sie waren zugleich gefährlich.

Im Mittelalter standen zwar verschiedene Hilfsmassnahmen gegen den Tod im ungetauften Zustand zur Verfügung (Nottaufe, die Taufe in utero, Sectio an gestorbenen Müttern). Kam ein Kind aber trotz aller Vorsorge tot zur Welt, so gab es als letzte Möglichkeit die Wallfahrt zu einer Stätte, an der tote Kinder für kurze Zeit zum Leben erweckt werden konnten. Diese Wiederbelebungen hatten einzig die Taufe zum Ziel (wodurch das Kind zu einem Christen wurde).

Solche Wallfahrtsorte gab es in grosser Zahl vor allem in Frankreich, dann in Belgien, Oberitalien, Österreich und im süddeutschen Raum. In den auch nach der Reformation katholisch gebliebenen Gegenden wurden sie bis ins 19. Jahrhundert benutzt. Auch in der Schweiz gab es mehrere – meist Marienwallfahrtsorte – der bekannteste war wohl Oberbüren (ferner Châtillens im Waadtland, Neuenburg, die Kathedrale von Lausanne und die Kapelle der Augustiner Nôtre-Dame-de-Grâce in Genf).

Die Wiederbelebung

Im Brief (um 1486) des Bischofs von Konstanz wird der Vorgang der Wiederbelebung beschrieben: Frauen, die von den weltlichen Behörden bestimmt wurden, sollen die Leichen zwischen glühenden Kohlen und mit ringsum hingestellten brennenden Kerzen und Lichtern erwärmt haben. Dann legte man dem Kind (vor dem Marienbild?) eine Feder über die Lippen, und wenn sich diese bewegte, erklärten "die Weiber", dass das Kind atme, also lebe, worauf man es unter Glockengeläute und Lobgesängen taufte. Nach dem umgehend wieder eingetretenen Tod konnten sie kirchlich beerdigt werden.

Im Gegensatz zu Wallfahrtsorten in Frankreich und Belgien, wo die Wiederbelebung öfters Tage oder Wochen dauerte und wo man sich auf Lebenszeichen stützte, die beispielsweise in einer Änderung der Hautfarbe, in Speichelfluss oder Flüssigkeitsaustritt äussern konnten – (also weitgehend auf Kennzeichen, die wir heute im Zusammenhang mit der Leichenzersetzung sehen), griff man in Oberbüren also zu einem relativ einfachen „Kunstgriff“.

Soweit die schriftliche und legendenhafte Überlieferung als Rahmengesamtheit für die Grabungsbefunde.

Die Befunde an den totgeborenen Kindern

Auf der Chilchmatt wurden bis heute über 250 Totgeburten gefunden (Stand Januar 1997). Das ist sehr wenig gemessen an der Zahl, die der Bischof von Konstanz nennt, denn nach seinen Angaben sollen allein bis 1486 über zweitausend Totgeburten zum Leben erweckt worden sein. (Auf die Diskrepanz zwischen gefundener und überlieferter Zahl kann hier nicht eingegangen werden).

Im Hinblick auf unser Thema interessieren vor allem diejenigen Befunde, die einen Einblick in die Geschehnisse an diesem Wallfahrtsort geben. Weshalb können wir überhaupt von Totgeburten sprechen?

Im wesentlichen sind es vier Kriterien, in denen sich Oberbüren von einem normalen mittelalterlichen Friedhof unterscheidet:

- Das Alter der Kinder.
- Die Lage der Bestattungsfelder.
- Die Bestattungsart.
- Die Lage der Skelette.

1) Das Alter der Totgeburten

Die Totgeburten setzen sich – nach dem gegenwärtigen Auswertungsstand – ausschliesslich aus früh- und neugeborenen Kindern zusammen, d.h. aus Kindern, deren Körperlänge zwischen 17-18 cm und maximal 57 cm lag. Nach der an unserem Institut eingeführten Konvention bezeichnen wir Kinder mit einer Körperlänge von unter 45 cm als Frühgeborene, Kinder mit einer Körperlänge zwischen 45 und 55 cm als Neugeborene. Die Eingrenzung, welche Kinder man allein aufgrund des Skelettbefundes als Neonate (in Gegenüberstellung zu Frühgeburten und Säuglingen) bezeichnen kann, ist heikel. Man muss sich mindestens bewusst sein, dass trotz der Korrelation von Körperlänge und Alter unterentwickelte Kinder („small for date babies“) altersmässig eher unterschätzt, grossgewachsene Kinder eher überschätzt werden.

Der Hauptanteil der Kinder von Oberbüren weist eine Körperlänge zwischen 45 cm und 55 cm auf – definitionsgemäss sind dies die Neugeborenen. Etwas mehr als ein Drittel aller Totgeburten hatte eine Körperlänge von unter 45 cm und gehört zu den Frühgeburten. Im Unterschied zu anderen mittelalterlichen Fundkomplexen ist für Oberbüren der hohe Anteil sehr kleiner Frühgeburten kennzeichnend (Abb. 2).

In seinem Schreiben erwähnt der Bischof von Konstanz, dass „Frühgeburten ... bisweilen solche, welche noch nicht ausgebildete Glieder hätten, sondern nur Klumpen bildeten“ zur Wiederbelebung gebracht würden. Demzufolge brachte man auch sehr früh abortierte Stadien nach Oberbüren. In dieser Aussage

können wir den Konstanzer Bischof so weit bestätigen, als dies von den biologischen Realitäten her möglich ist. Das kleinste bis dato belegte Kind ist ein Fetus mit einer Körperlänge von rund 17 cm, was einem Alter von etwa 3,5-4 Lunarmonaten entspricht. Noch kleinere bzw. jüngere Stadien, als die von uns dokumentierten, können sich in der Regel im Boden nicht lange erhalten, weil das Skelett zu wenig verknöchert ist.

Weiter beschreibt der Bischof: „Kinder „deren einige noch kein Leben im Mutterleib empfangen“. Um diese Angabe zu verstehen, muss man wissen, dass der Embryo damals erst nach seiner Beseelung als Mensch galt. Die „Animatio“ soll bei Knaben am 40. und bei Mädchen am 80. Tag eingetreten sein. Was das Alter der Kinder anbetrifft, lassen sich die Skelettfunde also mit Totgeburten vereinbaren.

2) Die topographische Lage der Bestattungsfelder

Offensichtlich benutzte man verschiedene kleine Felder für die Beisetzung der Totgeburten. Zwei dieser Areale lagen auf der Nordseite der Wallfahrtskirche, davon eines an der Westmauer der Sakristei, das andere nördlich von Turm und Nordmauer der Kirche. Beide Felder schlossen nicht unmittelbar an die Kirchenmauer an. Auf der Südseite der Kirche, nahe der Stützmauer der Wallfahrtsterrasse, fanden sich drei weitere, gut abgegrenzte Felder mit Totgeburten. In den Fundamentgruben der südlichen und nördlichen Terrassenmauer gab es an drei Stellen Gruben mit Totgeburten (vgl. Abb. 1).

Auffällig ist, dass die Bestattungsplätze auf beiden Seiten der Kirche eine annähernd gleiche topographische, fast symmetrische Lage gegenüber der

Kirche einnahmen. War es eine bestimmte Kircheneinrichtung (Altar, Marienbild?) oder gab es eine Ausschmückung an den Aussenfassaden der Kirche (Nische?), die zu dieser Anordnung führte?

Im Osten der Kirche ausserhalb des Chors fanden sich keinerlei Spuren von solchen Kleinstkindern. Dieser Befund überrascht, weil der an den Chor anschliessende Aussenbreich im Mittelalter ein bevorzugter Begräbnisplatz für Kinder, insbesondere für Säuglinge und Kleinstkinder war. Die Westseite mittelalterlicher Kirchen wurde ebenfalls gerne als Begräbnisplatz für Kinder benutzt. Über die entsprechende Fundsituation in Oberbüren sind dazu keine Beobachtungen möglich, denn diese Flächen sind überbaut.

3) Bestattungsweise

Mit Ausnahme der Gräber an der Westmauer der Sakristei waren die Kleinstkinderbestattungen nur wenig eingetieft. Reste eines Holzsarges wurden bei keinem einzigen Kind beobachtet; vielmehr lassen die oft sehr eng nebeneinander liegenden Körper darauf schliessen, dass die Leichen nur in Tücher oder Windeln eingewickelt in die Erde gelegt worden waren. Textile Reste haben sich keine erhalten. Beigaben wie Münzen oder Schmuckgegenstände fehlen.

Eines der aussagekräftigsten Kriterien für die Rekonstruktion der Geschehnisse an diesem Wallfahrtsort ist die Anordnung der Totgeburten. In fast allen Feldern herrscht eine überaus dichte Belegung vor. Man bestattete die Kinder meist in Reihen, die aus mehreren direkt übereinander liegenden Schichten bestanden. Bei denjenigen Gruben, die keine

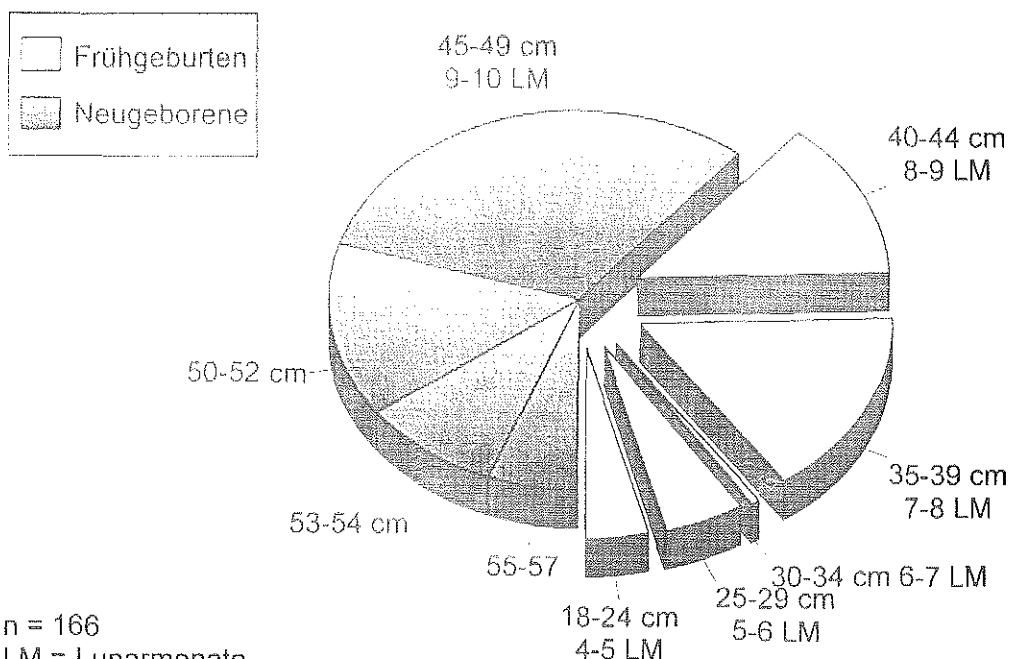


Abb. 2. - Altersaufbau der Totgeburten.

Körperlängenverteilung der totgeborenen Kinder von Oberbüren. Unter den bisher ausgewerteten Kinderskeletten bilden die Kinder mit einer Körperlänge zwischen 45 und 55 cm die Mehrheit. Nur wenige hatten eine grössere Körperlänge (bis maximal 57 cm). Die restlichen Kinder sind Frühgeburten.

sekundäre Störung aufwiesen, war zu erkennen, dass die Kinder manchmal unmittelbar nebeneinander gereiht wurden, sozusagen Körper an Körper und Kopf an Kopf. Auch in der Vertikalen liegen die Schichten direkt übereinander. In einem Fall misst die ehemalige Grube recht genau 1 x 1 m und enthält gegen 50 Kinder – alles Früh- und Neugeborene. Häufig müssen mehrere Kinder gemeinsam bestattet worden sein, wohl dann, wenn innerhalb kurzer Zeit eine grössere Zahl von Wallfahrern eingetroffen war.

Ob die unterschiedliche Zahl der auf einem Feld bestatteten Kinder temporäre Schwankungen und damit gewissermassen den Wallfahrtszyklus widerspiegelt, ist zur Zeit noch eine offene Frage.

Neben diesen Gemeinschaftsgruben gab es auch Einzelgräber, allerdings wenige. Vorläufig kennen wir die Ursache der unterschiedlichen Bestattungsart nicht. Die naheliegendste Erklärung ist wohl die, dass Einzelgräber geschaufelt wurden, wenn nur wenige oder einzelne Kinder zu bestatten waren. War der Andrang von Wallfahrern mit toten Kindern gross, wichen man auf Sammelbegräbnisse aus. Andere Möglichkeiten sind aber auch mit in die Diskussion einzubeziehen, so z.B. die geographische und auch die soziale Herkunft des Kindes: Setzte man Totgeburten, die aus der nahen Umgebung hergebracht wurden, in Einzelgräbern bei, die „Anonymen“ aus der Fremde respektive die Pfarreiexternen dagegen in den grossen Gruben? Spielten soziale Unterschiede eine Rolle im Sinne, dass vermögendere Eltern ein Einzelgrab für ihr totes Kind finanzieren konnten, während die ärmeren sozusagen mit dem Gemeinschaftsgrab vorlieb nehmen mussten? Hing der Begräbnisaufwand also vom Spendenaufwand ab? Den Augustiner Mönchen in Genf, die ebenfalls Wiederbelebungen praktizierten, warf man jedenfalls vor, den Preis für die Erweckung einer Totgeburt je nach Vermögen der Eltern hinaufgetrieben zu haben!

Auch wenn die relativchronologischen Abfolgen noch nicht vollständig ausgewertet sind, lässt sich beim gegenwärtigen Wissensstand aus der Bestattungsweise der Kinder ein Abweichen vom mittelalterlichen Begräbnismodus deutlich ablesen.

4) Die Lage der Skelette

Aus der Lage der Skelette lassen sich weitere Rückschlüsse auf die Behandlung dieser Totgeburten ziehen (Abb. 3).

Manche Kinder nehmen eine normale Rückenlage ein. Die Arme liegen öfters angewinkelt im Bauchbereich – eine Position, die bei so kleinen Kindern proportionsbedingt schwierig ist und nur durch eine bewusste Herrichtung, z.B. durch Fixierung der

Arme erreicht werden kann. Bei den auf dem Rücken bestatteten Kindern variiert die Lage der Beine weit mehr. Selten sind gestreckte Beine, was einer unphysiologischen Haltung bei Säuglingen entspricht im Gegensatz zur natürlichen O-Bein-Stellung. Parallel gestreckte Beine wären vor allem dann zu erwarten, wenn das Neugeborene in eine kompakte Windeltüte, wie sie für das Mittelalter bildlich überliefert sind, gesteckt worden wäre oder wenn man die Beine eng einbandagierte hätte.

Häufig lagen die Kinder auf der Seite, die Beine im Knie leicht, öfters aber auch ausgesprochen stark angewinkelt fast in Hockerstellung (Embryonalstellung). In einigen Fällen erweckte die in situ-Lage sogar den Eindruck, man hätte die Leichen zu möglichst kleinen Päckchen verschnürt. Daneben gab es einige Kinder, die mit dem Oberkörper gegen die Bauchseite gedreht waren oder verdrehte Lagen der Extremitäten hatten. Solche abnormen Körperhaltungen entstanden zum Teil postmortal. Möglicherweise widerspiegeln sich in ihnen vereinzelt auch Dekompositionsvorgänge, denn in der öfters wohl mehrere Tage beanspruchenden Pilgerreise zum Ort des Wunders müssen die Leichen in Verwesung übergegangen sein, besonders in der warmen Jahreszeit. Wurden sie nur lose in Tücher eingewickelt und vielleicht in Kistchen transportiert, sind solche Verdrehungen von Körperteilen erklärbar.

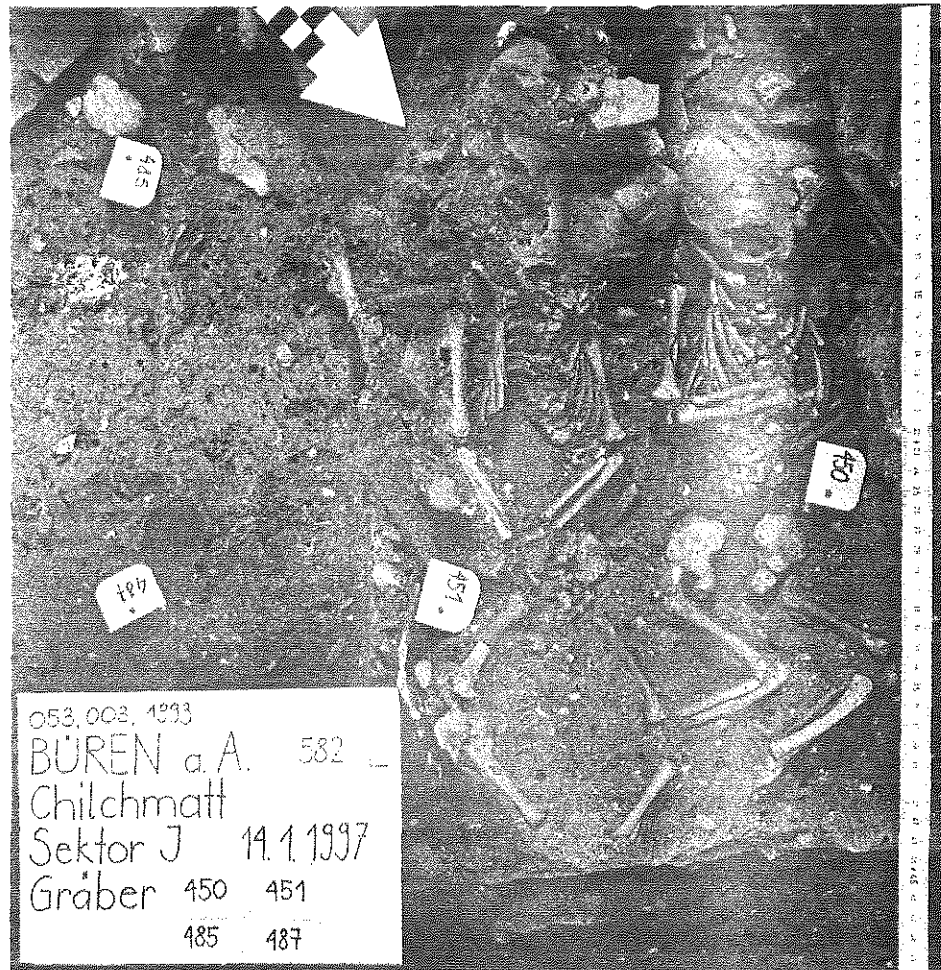
In der Gesamtschau kommt die Besonderheit dieses Friedhofes zwar deutlich zum Ausdruck; eher wenig ist von den Todesumständen dieser Kinder spürbar, wenn man bedenkt, dass viele dieser Kinder abortiv auf die Welt gekommen sind. Bisher gibt es keinen einzigen Befund, aus dem auf massive Eingriffe (Emryotomie) etwa der Geburtshelferin zu schliessen wäre.

Fazit: Ob in einem Einzelgrab oder in einer Gemeinschaftsgrube beigesetzt, alle Kinder waren nach Osten ausgerichtet, wo am Jüngsten Tag der Herr erscheinen soll. Indirekt bestätigt die Einhaltung dieses christlichen Brauchs, dass die Wiedererweckung gelungen und die Taufe dadurch ermöglicht worden ist. Auch mit der Armlage, die öfters der Gebetshaltung angenähert ist, achtete man darauf zu zeigen, dass es sich beim toten Kind um einen Christen handelte.

Das Fortdauern der Wallfahrt selbst nach Abbruch der Kirche

Im Februar 1528 beschloss der bernische Rat, dass das Marienbild, Altar und andere Götzen zu entfernen seien. Da dieser Ratsaufforderung nicht Folge geleistet wurde, reiste anfangs März desselben Jahres

Abb. 3. - Totgeburten: Ausschnitt aus einem Gräberbezirk im Süden der Kirche.



ein Berner Ratsherr nach Büren, um die Muttergottes von Oberbüren eigenhändig zu verbrennen. Nach der Überlieferung ging die Wallfahrt trotzdem weiter.

Mehr als zwei Jahre später, am 6. Juli 1530, wurde verordnet, die Kirche sei abzureissen. Selbst nach der Zerstörung der Kirche sollen die Wallfahrten andauert haben; die Leute hätten ihre Gaben einfach um den noch stehen gebliebenen Turm auf den Boden gelegt.

Nochmals zwei Jahre später, am 12. Oktober 1532, gebot der Berner Rat: „Der thurn zu büren soll uff der würtzen hinweggeschliffen werden“.

Dieser Verordnung Berns kam man letztlich nach und zwar im Sinne des Wortes: Kirche und zugehörige Anlagen wurden bis auf die „würzen“ zerstört. Die Ausgrabungen bestätigen dies auf eindrucksvolle Weise: Von der Kirchenanlage blieben praktisch nur die ausgeräumten Fundamentgruben übrig.

In genau diesen geleerten Fundamentgruben fand man völlig überraschend Bestattungen von Totgeburten. Diese Skelette lagen im Abbruchmaterial, können also erst nach 1528 respektive nach der Zerstörung der Terrassenmauer in den Boden gekommen sein. In einer der beiden Gruben auf der Südseite der Kirche zählten wir mindestens 20 Kinder, die Körper an Körper, die Gesichter fast schindelartig aneinander

gelegt und mit Blick nach Osten, begraben worden waren. Die Arme sind in Gebetshaltung positioniert. Noch nach Abbruch der Kirche müssen also Pilger hierher gekommen sein, was einerseits das in den Quellen genannte über Jahre hinweg verzögerte Ablassen von der Wallfahrt belegt, andererseits aber auch sehr klar zeigt, dass die Kapelle im Volksbewusstsein noch lange als Gnadenstätte gegolten hatte.

Die Zeit nach der Reformation

1528 wurde in unserem Gebiet die Reformation eingeführt. Damit war die Taufe nicht mehr heilsnotwendig und auch keine Bedingung mehr für ein Begräbnis im Kirchenfriedhof. Trotzdem blieb im Volk eine gewisse Unsicherheit über die Zukunft der Ungetauften im Jenseits bestehen, die ein Tradieren der Jenseitsvorsorge bewirkte. Vor allem in ländlichen Gegenden begrub man ungetaufte Kinder gerne unter der Dachtraufe der Kirche im Glauben, dass sie durch das vom Kirchendach rinnende Regenwasser nachträglich getauft würden. Schriftquellen und die Gräber von zahlreichen solchen Traufkindern aus der Neuzeit, die man entlang der Mauern bernischer Kir-

chen (und natürlich auch anderswo) fand, belegen diesen Brauch der Jenseitsvorsorge. Diese neuzeitlichen Traufkinder sind eine Art Nachfolger der ungetauften verstorbenen Kinder des Mittelalters.

Spannen wir den Bogen weiter bis in unsere Zeit, so konstatiert man die Persistenz einer ambivalenten Haltung den Totgeburten gegenüber und erst aufgrund einer Gesetzesrevision von 1994 ist es den Eltern in der Schweiz durchgängig erlaubt, einem totgeborenen Kind einen Namen zu geben und es auf bestimmten Feldern der Friedhöfe bestatten zu lassen.

Schlusswort

Unseres Wissens ist Oberbüren der erste derartige Wallfahrtsort, an dem nicht nur detaillierte archäologische, sondern auch anthropologische Untersuchungen durchgeführt werden können und der zudem durch schriftliche Quellen belegt ist.

Aus anthropologischer Sicht ist wichtig, dass wir nun definieren können, was unter einer Totgeburt im Mittelalter überhaupt zu verstehen ist. Diese Definition erlaubt in der Folge wichtige Statements zu den perinatal verstorbenen Kindern der früheren wie auch der jüngeren Zeitepochen.

Auf der Ebene der mentalitätsbedingten Zusammenhänge ist schliesslich zu vermerken, dass die Stellung der Totgeborenen weiterhin problematisch ist, wenn auch die zugrunde liegenden Kriterien zwischen Mittelalter, Neuzeit und unserer heutigen einen Wandel durchgemacht haben.

Literaturauswahl

- ACKERMANN-LIEBRICH U., BODENMANN A., MARTIN-BÉLAN B., PACCAUD F. & SPÜHLER Th. 1990: *Totgeburten und Säuglingstierblichkeit in der Schweiz 1982-1985*, Statistische Berichte 14, Gesundheit, Bundesamt für Statistik, Bern.
- GÉLIS J. 1993: Les sanctuaires „à répit“ des Alpes françaises et du Val d'Aoste: espace, chronologie, comportements pélerins, *Archivio Storico Ticinese* 30, n° 114, 183-222.
- HESS A. 1985: *Die Wallfahrtskapelle zu Oberbüren*, Schriftliches Propädeutikum im Fach Kirchengeschichte (Manuskript), Evang. theolog. Fakultät der Universität Bern.
- ULRICH-BOCHSLER S. 1990: Von Traufkindern, unschuldigen Kindern, Schwangeren und Wöchnerinnen. Anthropologische Befunde zu Ausgrabungen im Kanton Bern, In: SCHIBLER J., SEDLMEIER J. & SPYCHER Hp., *Festschrift für Hans R. Stampfli. Beiträge zur Archäozoologie, Archäologie, Anthropologie, Geologie und Paläontologie*, Helbing & Lichtenhahn, Basel, 309-318.
- ULRICH-BOCHSLER S. 1996: *Anthropologische Befunde zu Frau und Kind in Mittelalter und Neuzeit unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Stellung der Früh- und Neugeborenen – Soziobiologische und soziokulturelle Aspekte im Lichte von Archäologie, Geschichte, Volkskunde und Medizingeschichte*, Diss. phil. nat., Basel.
- ULRICH-BOCHSLER S. & GUTSCHER D. 1994: Die Wallfahrt mit totgeborenen Kindern zur Marienkapelle in Oberbüren (Kanton Bern), In: JEZLER P. (Hrsg.), *Himmel Hölle Fegefeuer: Das Jenseits im Mittelalter. Katalog zur Ausstellung des Schweizerischen Landesmuseums in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Schnütgen-Museum und der Mittelalterabteilung des Wallraf-Richartz-Museums der Stadt Köln*, Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zürich, 192-194.
- VASELLA A. 1966: Über die Taufe totgeborener Kinder in der Schweiz, *Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Kirchengeschichte* 60, 1-70.

Susi Ulrich-Bochsler
Medizinhistorisches Institut
Historische Anthropologie
Universität Bern
Fabrikstrasse 29D
3012 Bern
Schweiz

Berit J. Sellevold

Children's Skeletons and Graves in Scandinavian Archaeology

Among archaeologists, historians and other scientists working with population studies, data from archaeological skeletal assemblages are basic to demographic analyses (Ammerman 1989; Siven 1991; Siven 1991). But quite often the data are used without due attention to important source critical questions relating to archaeological skeletal material (see for instance Benedictow 1993). For this reason it may be problematical to interpret the results of demographic analyses based on such material. In fact, sometimes the results of demographic analyses might be invalid due to the inherently biased representation of children's skeletons and graves.

Archaeological skeletal material is never perfect and intact, compared to its original state. Children's skeletons are particularly vulnerable to factors causing fragmentation and breakdown. Children are almost always under-represented in archaeological skeletal populations. In this paper, I will focus on some factors which affect the source value of skeletal materials, and more particularly on critical factors relating to children's skeletons and graves. I shall discuss the representativeness of children's graves and skeletons in Iron Age and medieval Scandinavian archaeological material as well as aspects of burial customs for children.

1 Children's skeletons: factors affecting representativeness

The value of a given skeletal collection as source material in population studies depends on the degree to which it is representative of the original 'universe' or population. There are several factors which contribute to the loss of information potential in skeletal material. Some are of particular importance with regard to the representativeness of children's skeletons: culturally determined factors, taphonomic factors, archaeological investigations, recovery procedures, and aspects of research history.

1.1 CULTURAL FACTORS

1.1.1 *Disturbed graves*

Cultural factors determining how the child was treated at death, whether it was buried in a grave or not, affect the recovery of children's remains, and play a significant role with regard to the representativeness of children in archaeological assemblages. Whether or not the child was buried in a grave, how the grave was constructed and where it was located all are important to the survival of the remains. The grave may, for instance, be located in a churchyard or cemetery. Disturbances of older graves as a result of burial activity are the rule in Christian churchyards, but they can also be observed in some pagan cemeteries. Particularly in churchyards, burial activity was characteristically fairly intensive, which meant that earlier graves were frequently disturbed when new graves were dug in crowded areas. The burial activity seems to have disturbed children's graves in particular.

1.1.1.1 *Example: the medieval Sola church ruin*

In medieval society – and apart from a very few exceptions – anyone who had been baptized, *i.e.* also children, should be buried in the churchyard. But this does not mean that random samples of a skeletal population in a churchyard will be representative of the original population. Usually, osteological analyses of skeletal material from churchyards only consider material from undisturbed graves or from undisturbed parts of graves. In my opinion, this is a random sample of the churchyard population. A case in point is the analysis of the skeletal material from the small medieval parish church at Sola in Rogaland in SW Norway. In 1986 I participated in the excavations, and the archaeologist Alf Tore Hommedal and I carried out an experiment with regard to excavation procedures and documentation techniques for the skeletal remains. The find context and exact location of every single

bone was recorded, even bones deriving from destroyed graves, which were dispersed in the cultural layers between the intact graves. This careful documentation made it possible to perform detailed analyses of the dispersed bones. When I subsequently analyzed the skeletal material, comparing the finds from intact graves with those from disturbed graves, I got a very interesting result with regard to the age distributions in these two (random) samples (Sellevold 1989):

Table 1

Age distribution in intact graves and among dispersed bones from disturbed graves, Sola church ruin.

Age group	Undisturbed graves		Disturbed graves		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
New-born	4	17.4	15	25.0	19	22.9
0-6 years	1	4.3	9	15.0	10	12.0
7-13 years	2	8.7	4	6.7	6	7.2
14-19 years	2	8.7	8	13.3	10	12.0
20-35 years	3	13.0	13	21.7	16	19.3
36-55 years	2	8.7	4	6.7	6	7.2
Over 55 years	7	30.4	0	0	7	8.4
Over 20 years	1	4.3	7	11.7	8	9.6
Undet. age	1	4.3	0	0	1	1.2
Total	23	99.8	60	100.1	83	99.8

Table 1 shows that in the intact (undisturbed) graves there were 17.4% new-born, 30.4% were under 12-14 years, 39.1% were under c. 18-20 years. Among the dispersed bones from disturbed graves, however, there were 25.0% new-born, 46.7% under 12-14 years, and 60.0% under 18-20 years. If we look at the oldest individuals in the material – the age group over 55 years – there are none of this age group in the dispersed material in spite of the fact that this age group constituted 30.4% of the individuals from intact graves. In other words, there is a clear difference between the age profiles in the materials from intact and those from destroyed graves. One of the reasons for the presence of so many children in the dispersed bone material is probably that the small children's graves were constructed in such a way that they were quickly disturbed by the construction of new graves. Put otherwise, they had not been dug as deep as the graves for adults. But part of the explanation might also be that childhood mortality fluctuated throughout the period in which the churchyard was in use. The results of this investigation are based on small numbers and this does not allow us to draw conclusions which are too strong. Nevertheless, the trend seems very clear.

1.1.1.2 Example: the Early Roman cemetery Simonsborg

A similar situation pertained at Simonsborg, an Early Roman period cemetery on the island of Zealand in Denmark. Here too, there was a greater number of children in the material from disturbed graves than from intact graves (Sellevold 1979; Sellevold, Hansen *et al.* 1984). The intact graves yielded remains of 5 children out of a total of 43 individuals (11.6%) while the disturbed graves yielded remains of 6 children out of a total of 33 individuals (18.2%). With regard to both the Sola and the Simonsborg materials, demographic analyses based only on material from intact graves would not give a correct representation of the original population.

The results of the investigations of bones from disturbed graves at Sola and Simonsborg strongly suggest that such material should always be analyzed. However, this work requires both time and patience (and money), both on the archaeological and on the osteological side. And it is very seldom given priority. It requires a very close co-operation between archaeologists and anthropologists with regard to the development of a method, even prior to the start of the actual excavation, and with regard to both field documentation and the analyses of the dispersed bones. The development of the method must vary from site to site. Find context and field documentation are decisive factors in order to obtain sustainable results.

1.1.2 Iron Age burial customs

Another cultural factor affecting the presence of children in the skeletal material from prehistoric times is the probable differential treatment of adults and children at death. Ethnographic studies point to differential treatment in burial customs contingent on e.g. age, sex, social status or the way in which the individual died (Binford 1971 quoted in Chapman 1977). This may also have been the case in past societies. The results of my investigation of the entire Danish Iron Age skeletal material showed that there were surprisingly few children's skeletons (Sellevold, Hansen *et al.* 1984). The analyzed material consists of more than 1000 individuals, but only 17% of these were children or youths. There was a degree of geographical variation in the representation of children in Iron Age Denmark and there were some differences between the sub-periods of the Iron Age. These variations are most probably culturally determined and do not depend on conditions relating to the investigation or excavation techniques.

Even if childhood mortality was low in prehistoric Denmark, it cannot have been as low as the numbers of children's skeletons from archaeological find contexts seem to indicate. In some groups it must have been a custom not to bury children in the local cemetery, either because they were buried elsewhere, or because they were not deemed worthy of a grave at all. It seems probable that in Iron Age Denmark most children were not buried in the same places and in the same manner as adults.

1.1.3 *Variations between churches*

Other cultural factors which affect the presence of children's graves are variations in the social structure of the congregations associated with different types of churches in the Middle Ages: there were differences between e.g. parish churches, cathedrals and monasteries. Hence there were also differences in the composition of the buried populations. An example illustrates this. While there were only 14.7% newborn, infants and small children in the skeletal material from the churchyard of the medieval Hamar cathedral in Southern Norway (Sellevold 1994), the corresponding proportion was 21.7% from the small parish church at Sola in SW Norway (see below; the percentages from Hamar and Sola are both based on material from undisturbed graves.) There may also be differences between the same types of churches in different social settings: large differences in the age distribution profiles have been demonstrated in skeletal materials from early medieval urban and rural parish churches in Scania, Southern Sweden (Arcini 1992).

1.2 TAPHONOMY

'Taphonomy is the study of all changes that occur within an animal or plant following death' (Child 1995). Taphonomic processes are among the most important causes of the under-representation of children's skeletons in archaeological materials. After death, the body disintegrates. The soft parts of the body dissolve quickly while the skeletal parts break down more slowly, depending on the taphonomic agents present. Such agents include the physical and chemical environment in the soil (bacteria, enzymes, water, Ph-factor, etc.), small rodents, carnivores etc. The small children's bones, which may not even be fully mineralized, will disintegrate at a faster rate than the bones of adults.

An important taphonomic agent is man. A large part of the under-representation of children in archae-

ological skeletal material must be ascribed to modern human activity. Children's graves may have been ploughed away during agricultural work or by gravel digging or similar enterprises. This is perhaps particularly relevant with regard to prehistoric cemeteries, which are not necessarily visible and known as cultural historical monuments or sites and which may therefore be destroyed accidentally. Churchyards are generally more easily recognized than pagan cemeteries, but even here, agricultural or other activities may have destroyed larger or smaller parts.

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Archaeological investigations are carried out for a number of different reasons, very often as emergency interventions (rescue) and more rarely as research excavations. The degree of completeness of an investigation relative to the original size of a given site will also vary for a number of reasons. I shall not go into these here. The extent of the excavation is an important and critical factor. Investigations of prehistoric localities often include the entire site, but medieval churchyards are hardly ever excavated completely. For the representativeness of children in the osteological material, it proved to be of great importance *which part of the churchyard* has been excavated. It seems that in some churchyards special areas were reserved for children's burials. The archaeological investigations do not necessarily include these areas. There are several examples of this from the recent years' investigations of medieval churches and churchyards in Norway. I shall briefly discuss two of them.

1.3.1 *Example: the medieval St. Olav's church ruin*

Throughout the Middle Ages, the St. Olav's church in Trondheim functioned at different times as a parish church and as a church for the Franciscans. The ruins of the church have been restored, and different parts of the churchyard were archaeologically investigated in 1984-85 and in 1989.

The St. Olav's church was located on a promontory in the Nid river, surrounded by water to the east, south and west. The entire churchyard was located north of the church. In 1984-85, a large area far to the north of the church was investigated, uncovering stratigraphic layers from both the parish and the monastery phases of the churchyard. In 1989, the investigation covered a small area close to the north wall of the church choir. The 1989 investigation, in which I participated, dealt only with the Franciscan

phase of the churchyard, called Phase C. For the analyses of the material from 1989, I therefore used the contemporary Phase C-material from the 1984-85 investigations for comparisons. With regard to the age distributions this gave a very interesting result (Sellevold 1990):

Table 2

Distribution of age groups in different parts of the churchyard in the monastery phase of St. Olav's church, Trondheim, Norway.

Age group	Far from the church	Close to the church
New-born	1.2 %	27.6 %
0-6 years	2.4 %	17.2 %
7-13 years	4.9 %	3.4 %
14-19 years	14.0 %	3.4 %
20-35 years	32.3 %	20.7 %
36-55 years	22.6 %	27.6 %
Over 55 years	0.6 %	-
Over 20 years	17.1 %	-
Undet. age	4.9 %	-
Total	100.0 %	99.9 %

As Table 2 shows, there are significant differences between the frequencies of occurrence of children, especially the smallest children, in the material from the two locations in this churchyard. Far away from the church, the small children only constitute 3.6 % of the material (new-born = 1.2%, infants = 2.4%), while in the area close to the choir, a full 44.8% were small children (new-born = 27.6%, infants = 17.2%). This is of great importance with regard to the interpretation of the skeletal material: If we had only had the figures from the area far away from the church to base our conclusions on, we would say that either 1) there was an extremely low childhood mortality in Trondheim at this time, or 2) people did not let their dead children be buried in the monastery churchyard. But because we also had the opportunity to investigate another, contemporary section of the churchyard close to the church building, it could be shown that children, and particularly the smallest children, had a special area reserved for them in this churchyard.

1.3.2 Example: the medieval Hamar cathedral churchyard

In the churchyard of the medieval Hamar cathedral ruins in SE Norway it also turned out that children were unevenly distributed. A 1-2 meter wide ditch

around the church ruin, widened into four larger areas to the west, north, east and south, was archaeologically investigated (Sellevold 1994). The excavations recovered skeletal remains of 482 individuals from undisturbed graves. Of these there were 3.5% new-born, 11.2% small children, 9.3% older children, and 9.1% youths. Thus, children and youths constitute 33.2% of the entire material. As Figure 1 shows, the distribution of these subadults in the churchyard was unbalanced. Particularly in the south-western part of the churchyard, many children had been buried. In this area there were, in fact, more children than adults: 57.3% of those buried here were subadult. This is in contrast with the area west of the church, where only 7.7% of the individuals were subadult.

1.4 RECOVERY PROCEDURES

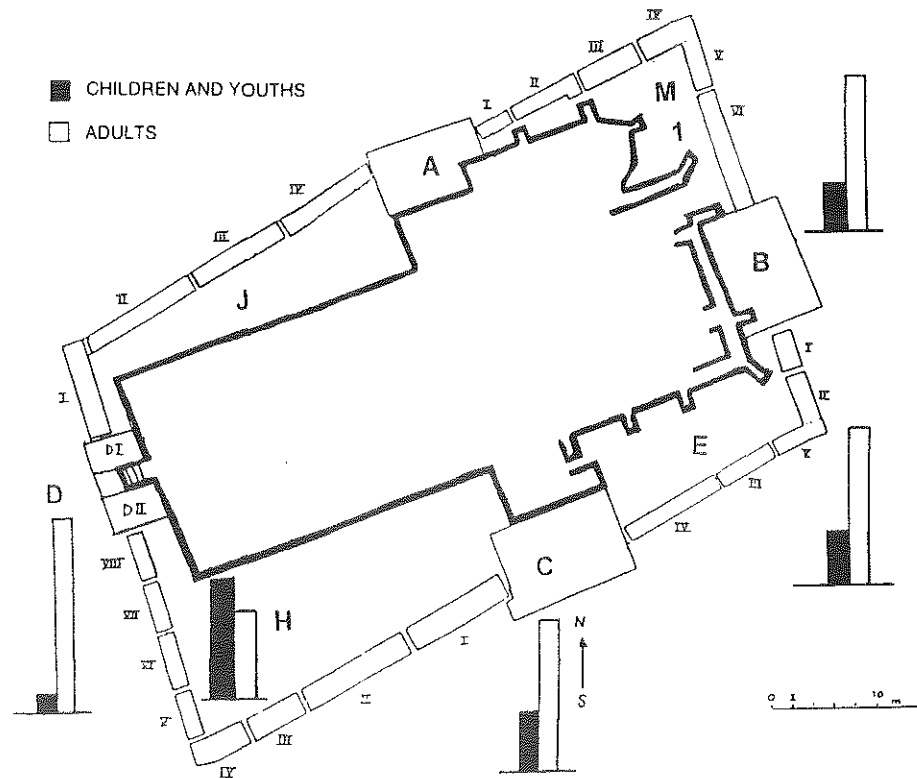
Excavation procedures and data documentation and registration routines may also contribute to an under-representation of children in churchyard material. Children's bones are often so small that, in given circumstances, children's graves may be missed, or overlooked, especially the very smallest graves.

A case in point is the excavation of the churchyard of the medieval Hamar cathedral ruin in 1991 and 1992 (see above). In 1991, we left profiles in the sections. In 1992, these profiles were documented and taken down. It then turned out that, in some cases, we found half of a child's grave remaining in the profile, but no record of having lifted the other half, nor any notes concerning the observation of such a grave in 1991. There may be many reasons for small children's skeletons being overlooked or missed, such as bad light, difficult soil conditions, unexperienced excavators, etc. Documentation procedures may also significantly affect the data: if dispersed bones from disturbed graves are not documented, lifted and analyzed, a skewed representation of children may result. And, if the anthropologist is not fully informed about the archaeological documentation procedures, this might lead to incorrect interpretations of the recovered skeletal remains, hence producing data which are unreliable (e.g. Sælebakke 1988; Holck 1989).

1.5 RESEARCH HISTORY

In Norway, practices which were part of the research histories of both archaeology and anthropology have also caused reductions in the original number of children in archaeological skeletal material. This reduction has primarily affected medieval material.

Fig. 1. - *Distribution of subadults and grown individuals around the Hamar cathedral ruin*



In the 1800s, the racial histories of population groups constituted important questions in historical research. Skeletons from graves were systematically collected to obtain material for race research (Næss & Sellevold 1990). The racial affinities of population groups were chiefly determined by skull measurements. It therefore seemed natural to take care of skulls, especially the well-preserved skulls which could be measured. There was little interest in postcranial bones, and no interest at all in dispersed bones from disturbed graves. The archaeologists did not think of the skeletons as archaeological source material, and if the anatomists or anthropologists were not interested in it, the material was usually reburied or redeposited. In Norway, some archaeologists did regard skeletal material as archaeological source material, but they were not given the opportunity to submit the material as finds, because neither the archaeological museums nor the Anatomical Institute at the University of Oslo would accept it (Brendalsmo, Müller *et al.* 1986). These practices are reflected in the skeletal material which is stored in museums and collections today.

There was a remarkable contrast between the treatment of prehistoric graves and graves from historical periods: while each single prehistoric grave received individual treatment as a 'unique find', or closed find, grave finds from historical times – and especially from the Middle Ages – were treated as 'mass finds', *i.e.* as finds consisting of large amounts of material with an expected limited information potential. Mass

finds were only summarily described. Only exceptionally were single graves from medieval and historical times described as closed or unique finds, such as royal graves for instance, while this was the most common way of treating single prehistoric graves.

1.5.1 *Example: skeletal remains from medieval Norwegian monasteries*

In Norway, medieval skeletal material which was collected before *c.* 1980 almost exclusively consists of skulls. In connection with a survey of all skeletal material from medieval Norwegian monasteries, I arrived at the following interesting table 3 (Sellevold 1997).

Table 3 shows that a marked change occurred between 1964 and 1984 in the recovery and storage practice for medieval skeletal (monastery) finds. In 1964, as in the 1920's, attempts were made to collect postcranial bones as well as skulls, but skulls were still of paramount interest. From the 1980's onwards, however, a new archaeological practice started: ALL bone material from medieval churchyard excavations were documented and stored. This is true not only of investigations in monasteries but also of all those concerning medieval churchyards.

The new practice is very interesting with regard to the representation of children's skeletons in museums and collections. Since the smallest children's skulls consist of separate bones, and the larger child-

Table 3*Extant skeletal material from medieval Norwegian monasteries*

Year	Name of monastery	No. of individuals		Total
		Skulls only	Skulls and/or postcranial bones	
1851	Hovedøya	2	-	2
1888	Nonneseter, Oslo	55	-	55
1890	Franciscans, Tønsb.	56	-	56
1898	Franciscans, Trondh.	154	-	154
1898-99	Gimsøy	33	-	33
1924-28	Olavsklosteret Oslo	5	26	31
1928	Elgeseter	8	-	8
1928-29	Dominicans, Trondh.	8	-	8
1934	Utstein	4	-	4
1941	Nidarholm	2	-	2
1949	Bakke	2	-	2
1964	Halsnøy	19	11	30
1984-85	Franciscans, Trondh.	-	164	164
1989	Nidarholm	-	67	67
1989	Franciscans, Trondh.	-	29	29
1990-92	Selja	-	26	26
Total		348	323	671

ren's skulls often are so fragile that they are not particularly well preserved in the soil, very few well preserved children's skulls are recovered. Consequently there are very few children's skulls in the material which was collected and stored before the 1980's (Sellevold 1997).

There has also been a selection of skeletal material by the anatomists in connection with the osteological/anthropological investigations (Brendalsmo, Müller *et al.* 1986). Complete skeletons have been submitted to the Anatomical Institute in Oslo, where the anatomists selected what they wanted, according to their own criteria and discarded the material that was not of interest to them. Children's bones were not considered to be of interest: an example of this is the fate of the skeletal remains of two new-born, found at the Utstein monastery in 1934. The bones were sent to the Anatomical Institute where they were registered upon arrival. The skeletons, however, are no longer extant.

2 Children's graves

2.1 THE IRON AGE

The most thoroughly investigated Scandinavian Iron Age skeletal material is from Denmark (Selle-

vold, Hansen *et al.* 1984). The material consists of skeletal remains of c. 1000 individuals. Only 17% of these are children. Like the adult skeletons, the children are unevenly distributed throughout the different periods of the Iron Age.

2.1.1 Grave type and location

Table 4 shows the distribution of children and youths in the material and the way in which they were buried.

The figures on the bottom line show how many children and youths there were in each of the defined sub-periods of the Iron Age in Denmark. There were no unburned remains of children from the Pre-Roman period, 500 BC to 0. From the Roman period seen as a whole, *i.e.* 0-400 A.D. (the columns Early Roman, Late Roman and Roman), there were 123 children. From the Migration to the Viking period, 400-1000 A.D., there were 38 children. Three children could not be allocated to a sub-period of the Iron Age. In all, there were unburned remains of 164 children from the Danish Iron Age, 500 BC to 1000 A.D..

119 children in all were buried in their own graves in a cemetery. This was by far the most usual mode of burial for subadults in the material: 72.6% of the total number were buried in this manner. 19 children's graves were found to be isolated, *i.e.* the grave was not

Table 4
Interments of children in Iron Age Denmark

Manner of burial	Early Roman			Late Roman			Roman			Migration			Late Germanic			Viking			Iron Age			Total		
	I	II	J	I	II	J	I	II	J	I	II	J	I	II	J	I	II	J	I	II	J	I	II	J
Alone outside cemetery	-	2	1	1	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	5	5
Alone inside cemetery	7	9	24	8	6	12	10	6	13	1	-	-	-	1	3	3	10	5	-	1	-	29	33	57
With adult outside cemetery	-	1	1	2	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3
With adult inside cemetery	1	2	1	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	5	5	2
With child(ren) inside cemetery	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Other (bog, pit etc.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	6	2	2
Subtotal	10	14	27	12	13	15	12	6	14	1	-	-	3	2	7	7	12	6	-	1	2	45	48	71
Total	51			40			32			1			12			25			3			164		

connected with a cemetery (a cemetery being defined as two or more graves in close proximity to one another). 11 of these graves were constructed especially for a child, while in 8 cases the child shared the grave with an adult (42.1%). In cemeteries, only 7.3% (12 children) shared a grave with an adult. Four graves in cemeteries contained children buried together.

The row 'Other' in the table comprises cases of children not found in a grave but in another context. 10 of the children's skeletons were found like this in the Danish material. From SW Norway there is an especially interesting example of this type of find context, ¹⁴C dated to 90-410 A.D. cal., from Bø, Hå in Rogaland (Sellevold 1987; Sellevold & Næss 1991). A farmer who was digging a ditch in a bog found something he described as 'four coconuts' at a depth of 1 m. They lay c. 30 cm apart. The anthropological investigations revealed that the find consisted of the skulls of four new-born babies. There were no postcranial skeletal parts. We may speculate about what this type of deposit means. A logical thought is that this is a case of human sacrifice.

2.1.2 Grave size and grave goods

In the archaeological literature, the length and size of a grave is sometimes used as a criterion for identifying children's graves in large cemeteries when there

are no skeletal remains. It is probably natural that one expects a small grave to contain a child, while large graves are expected to contain the remains of adult persons, or youths of adult size. Analysis work has been carried out on the sizes of children's graves in the Danish Iron Age material to see whether there was some correspondence between the length of the grave and the age of the child as expressed by the stature (Sellevold, Hansen *et al.* 1984). The analyses showed that in most cases the length of grave did not correspond with the stature/age of the child. We could not identify small or big children or youths based on grave size. The only exception was graves for new-born, which did not seem to vary in size/length. In the Danish Iron Age material there are only three skeletons of new-born found in graves. All three come from the large Slusegård cemetery on the island of Bornholm (Sellevold 1996). The lengths of these graves were between 50 and 75 cm. But already from the age of 1 year, there is a great variation in grave length. Graves with 1 year old children vary in length between 1 and 1.5 m. For children of 1 year or older up there is no longer any correspondence between grave length and the child's stature: graves for 2 year old children may be more than 2 m long. Two graves for children who were 3 and 3.5 years, respectively, were more than 2.5 m long! The longest grave was found for an 8 year old child: it measured between 3 and 3.5 m.

The conclusion is that in Iron Age Denmark grave size is not an unequivocal indication of the age of the buried individual: a large grave was not necessarily constructed for an adult. Nor is it possible to single out children's graves based on grave goods in the Iron Age. Children's grave goods consist of objects from the adult world. This is demonstrated for instance by an Early Roman period grave from Sønderholm near Ålborg on Jutland. The grave measured 2.8 by 1.2 m, and was covered with a stone layer and equipped with a stone frame. The grave goods included 1 bronze needle, 3 iron knives, 1 amber ring, and 11 clay pots. The skeletal remains, however, showed that this grave was constructed for an 11 year old child.

2.1.3 *Body position*

It was possible to determine the body position for about half of the buried children in the Danish Iron Age material, *i.e.* 54.4% (Sellevold, Hansen *et al.* 1984). The crouched position (sleeping position, *hocker*) strongly dominated: almost 75% of the children had been deposited in this way. In comparison, only 53.9% of the adults were buried in a crouched position. 24.4% of the children were buried extended on the back (supine) while 43.5% of the adults were buried in this way. It seems to have been a more common practice to bury children in a sleeping position than to bury adults this way.

2.2 THE MIDDLE AGES

In contrast to the Iron Age, medieval burial customs were, ideally, uniform for all. The most important features of medieval Christian burials were the following:

- All Christians were buried in consecrated ground (most often this means a churchyard);
- The grave was oriented west-east, with the head of the deceased in the west end of the grave;
- The deceased was deposited in a supine position, *i.e.* extended on the back;
- There were no grave goods.

In order to be buried in consecrated ground, the individual had to be baptized. As far as children are concerned, this means that when we find new-born in churchyards, we know that the child was not dead at birth, *i.e.* still-born, but lived long enough to be baptized. The rules for burial in consecrated ground did not apply to unbaptized individuals or certain categories of criminals.

There was to be no differential treatment of baptized individuals. But there are, of course, always

exceptions to such rules, even if the graves, by and large, appear to be rather uniform. In fact, medieval graves show variations but these are much more subtle than in the case of prehistoric burials. There may be differences with respect to elements which quickly disintegrated and disappeared, such as the wood of coffins or the textiles of shrouds, or there may be features which had inherent message values to contemporary society, but which are not immediately obvious to us today, such as, for instance, grave location.

2.2.1 *Status: grave goods and grave location*

The prohibition against depositing objects in the grave with the deceased was not always respected: amongst other things, we find rings, seals, rosary beads, coins (Sellevold 1994). Such occasional objects may indicate the social status of the buried individual.

Grave location was not haphazard. The location of the grave in the churchyard has been demonstrated to be a status-indicating factor. In several investigations we have been able to show that individuals buried close to the church walls had better growth conditions during childhood than individuals buried further away from the church. This is reflected, *inter alia*, in stature: individuals buried close to the church are taller than average. High social status is connected with good living conditions in the formative years (Sellevold 1994). For children we cannot use stature as a factor in analysing status. But the location of children's graves within a given churchyard can be determined. The location of children's graves with regard to certain churchyard categories also indicates status, most probably the status of the family rather than an acquired one. For instance, when we find children's graves inside monastery churches, we may assume that it is not children from the lowest echelons of society who have been buried in such high status places.

2.2.1.1 *Example: the Selja monastery*

In Western Norway, just off the North Sea coast, lies a small island called Selja. Here one finds some of the best preserved monastery ruins of Norway. The Selja monastery belonged to the Benedictine order and was founded around 1100 by monks from England and consecrated to St. Alban. The Selja monastery was the site of the first Norwegian episcopal see, which functioned until 1170 when the bishop moved to Bergen. Very close to the monastery was the shrine

of St. Sunniva, a famous and popular pilgrimage site in the Middle Ages, situated on the way to the very important shrine of St. Olav in Nidaros (Trondheim).

Archaeological excavations were carried out in the monastery ruins in 1991-1994 (Sellevold 1996; Sellevold 1997). A large area in the middle of the church nave was investigated and the remains of 26 individuals were recovered. Ten of these were children under the age of 6 (38.5%). Six were new-borns. This was a rather unexpected discovery. These children must have had a very special connection with the monastery in order to be buried inside the monastery church. Several reasons may be suggested, but the most probable one is that the children belonged to families which had connections with the monastery through donations of property and other large gifts. In other words, they were children from rich and important families.

An interesting point about the children's graves is that they were probably constructed fairly late in the life of the monastery, in the 1400's. This is shown by stratigraphic conditions. North of the mid-line of the church nave lie adult graves. South of this line one finds only children's graves, but in the mid-line is a grave which contains the skeleton of a 15 year old boy. The boy's grave has disturbed an earlier, adult grave. The child's grave is therefore younger than the adult grave. The other children's graves were also stratigraphically younger than the adult graves. The children's graves were constructed at a time when the financial situation of the monastery was poor. The economic history of the monastery is known from written sources. It seems reasonable to assume that the monks augmented the income of the monastery by selling burial plots inside the church and that rich families wanted their children to be buried in this prestigious area.

2.2.1.2 *Example: St. Olav's church, Trondheim*

At the St. Olav's church in Trondheim a similar situation occurred: in a small plot close to the choir of the church, dated to Phase C (*i.e.* the Franciscan phase of the churchyard), there was a great number of children (see above). It seems that this area was especially reserved for children's burials. The archaeological investigation was done in very meticulous way and we managed to document six layers of burials. The children's graves were not present from the beginning. In the two oldest layers, F and E, there were no children, but in layer D children's graves appeared, and children became more numerous in the younger layers (Ekroll 1989; Sellevold 1990). As at Selja there seems to have been a point in time when

it was possible to buy burial plots in prestigious areas close to or inside the church, and that families also wanted their children buried in prestigious locations.

2.2.2 *Own grave or shared grave*

In the Middle Ages as in prehistoric times, children could be buried alone in a grave or share a grave with another child or an adult. By far the most usual, however, was to bury a child alone in its own grave.

The size of the medieval child's grave was always fitted to the size of the child. In the churchyard of the medieval Hamar cathedral in South Norway there was a tiny grave, only 35 cm long, with the skeletons of prematurely born twins in the 5th or 6th foetal month lying side by side. The length of the thigh bones was only 4.4 cm (Sellevold 1994). We know that they must have breathed at birth, because they must have been baptized in order to be buried in the churchyard. And only the living were baptized.

When archaeologists find a grave with a large, perhaps adult, skeleton and the skeleton of a small child, they often call it a 'mother-and-child' grave. But this is not necessarily a correct interpretation. At the Sola church ruin in Rogaland, SW Norway, we found such a case (Sellevold 1994). The large skeleton was of a young male of c. 16 years, and the new-born child had been laid down on the boy's left leg. A Charon's coin had been placed in the baby's mouth. The archaeologist and myself as anthropologist lifted the grave together and concluded that the two had, in fact, been buried at the same time. This interesting observation shows that, from the Middle Ages until today, there is continuity of a practice which was maintained in Norway until a very few years ago, namely that dead infants did not necessarily get their own graves but could be buried with a coincidentally deceased person. It is probable that both the baby and the boy belonged to high status families at Sola: the shared grave was in a prestigious location very close to the south wall of the church.

2.2.3 *Unborn children*

We must assume that pregnancy and childbirth were higher risk conditions in prehistoric and medieval times than they are today. Sometimes the woman and child did not survive.

Pregnant women who died constituted a theological problem. The debates about this question give interesting insights into the medieval mentality. The unborn child was, in fact, a heathen, unbaptized, and should therefore not be buried in consecrated ground.

But the mother was baptized, and must therefore be buried in the churchyard. Was the foetus a part of the mother's body, or a separate individual? Since there are several cases of medieval skeletal finds of females with the foetus still *in utero*, the archaeological 'reality' demonstrates that, at least in some cases, it was the relationship between the mother and church which constituted the decisive consideration.

3 Conclusions

The main aim of this study has been to present some facts about archaeological skeletal material which must be taken into serious consideration by researchers doing population studies and palaeodemographic analyses. The skeletal material from archaeological investigations is almost never representative of the origin population because of the reduction that has occurred after death, caused by culture as well as by nature, both in the past and in the present. The skeletal assemblages which we have today are the end results of severe selection. The important source critical factors pertain especially to the skeletal remains of children.

My examples have been taken from Scandinavian archaeology and anthropology, but the story is probably not too different in other countries.

References

- AMMERMAN A. J. 1989: Population studies and the archaeologist, *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 22 (2), 67-76, 83-87.
- ARCINI C. 1992: Skillnader i ålders- och könsfördelning i populationen på medeltida kyrkogårdar i Skåne, *META* 1992 (1-2), 44-61.
- BENEDICTOW O.J. 1993: *The medieval demographic system of the Nordic countries*, Oslo, Middelalderforlaget.
- BINFORD L.R. 1971: Mortuary practises: Their study and potential, in: *Approaches to the social dimension of mortuary practises*, *Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology* 25, 6-29.
- BRENDALSMO A.J., I.H.V. MÜLLER *et al.* 1986: *Spørsmål vedrørende osteologi i norsk arkeologi. Med spesiell vekt på bevaring av det humanosteo-logiske kildemateriale*, Den arkeologiske interimskommisjon, Oslo.
- CHAPMAN R. W. 1977: Burial practices: an area of mutual interest, in: M. SPRIGGS (ed.), *Archaeology and anthropology*, B.A.R. Suppl. Series. 19, Oxford, 19-33.
- CHILD A. M. 1995: Microbial taphonomy of archaeological bone, *Studies in Conservation* 40, 19-30.
- EKKROLL Ø. 1989: Olavskyrkja. 8 fragment blir monument, *Arkeologiske undersøkelser i Trondheim* 3.
- HOLCK P. 1989: *Skjelettmaterialet fra Peterskirken, Tønsberg. En antropologisk rapport*, Oslo, Anatomisk Institutt, Universitetet i Oslo.
- NÆSS J.-R. & B.J. SELLEVOLD 1990: Graver fra historisk tid: vitenskapelig kilde og forvaltningsproblem. Med vekt på 'kristne' graver fra middelalder, *Collegium Mediaevale* 3, Supplement, 1-40.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1979: Menneskeskeletterne fra Simonsborg. En ældre romersk jernalders gravplads, *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1979, 69-87.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1987: *Funn fra Bø, Hå, Rogaland*, Rapport til Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1989: Comments on Population studies and the archaeologist, *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 22 (2), 77-83.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1990: Skjelettene i biblioteket. 'Olavskirken', Folkebiblioteket, Trondheim. Rapport om den antropologiske undersøkelsen av skjelettfunnene fra 1989, *Arkeologiske undersøkelser i Trondheim* 4, 1-77.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1994: *Antropologiske undersøkelser av skjelettmaterialet fra utgravningene ved Hamar Domkirkeruin 1991 og 1992*, Oldsaksamlingen, Institutt for Arkeologi, Kunsthistorie og Numismatikk, Universitetet i Oslo.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1994, S10294: Funn fra middelalderke og etterreformatoriske gravleggelser fra Sola Kirkeruin, Sola, gnr. 14, bnr. 34, Sola, flyfoto/reg.nr. 9360 C4 R10, forminnenr. R 11240014003. Katalog over skjelettmaterialet i gravene, in: J.-R. NÆSS & K. JUHL (ed.), *Samlingens tilvekst 1994*, AmS-Tilvekst 4, Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger, 48-61.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1996: Rik mann, fattig mann, tigger, tyv -, in: M. RINDAL (ed.), *Fra hedendom til kristendom. Perspektiver på religionsskiftet i Norge*, Oslo, Ad Notam Gyldendal, 63-77.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1996: The skeletal remains of the inhumation graves, in: *Slusegårdgravpladsen IV*, Aarhus, Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab, Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 159-188.
- SELLEVOLD B.J. 1997: Begravelsene i klosterkirken på Selja. Antropologiske undersøkelser av menneskeben funnet i ruinen av St. Albanuskirken på Selja, in: M. RINDAL (ed.), *Selja - Heilag stad i 1000 år.*, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 200-239.
- SELLEVOLD B.J., U.L. HANSEN *et al.* 1984; *Iron Age man in Denmark (Prehistoric man in Denmark Vol. III)*, Det kgl. Nordiske Oldskriftselskab: Nordiske Fortidsminder, Series B, Vol. 8, Copenhagen.

- SELLEVOLD B.J. & J.-R. NÆSS 1991: Mennesker i myr, in: B. WIK (ed.), *Sentrum – Periferi. Sentra og sentrumsdannelser gjennom førhistorisk og historisk tid. Den 18. nordiske arkeologkongress. Den 18. nordiske arkeologkongress, Trondheim 28.8.-4.9.1989*, Gunneria 64/2, Trondheim, 429-442.
- SIVEN C.-H. 1991: On estimating mortalities from osteological age data, *International Journal of Anthropology* 6 (2), 97-100.
- SIVEN C.-H. 1991: On reconstructing the (once) living population from osteological age data, *International Journal of Anthropology* 6 (2), 111-118.
- SÆLEBAKKE I. 1988: *Kommentarer til P. Holcks rapport "Skjelettmaterialet fra Tønsberg"*.

Berit J. Sellevold
NIKU – Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage
Research
Dronningens gt. 13, Pb. 736 Sentrum
0105 - Oslo
Norway

Reinterpreting Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries

Introduction

Over the years, Anglo-Saxon burial practice has been interpreted in a number of different ways. Jewellery, and dress accessories such as brooches, for example, have been heavily drawn upon in attempts to reconstruct the Anglo-Saxon ‘invasion’ or ‘migrations’ of the 5th and 6th centuries, by seeking parallels of form and decoration with the continental ‘homelands’. Archaeologists have attempted to reconstruct tribal areas within eastern Britain (Leeds 1949; Myres 1969), along the lines of those defined by Bede in the 8th century (H. E. i. 15). The same material has also been used to try to reconstruct social status and wealth groupings within early Anglo-Saxon society (Arnold 1980). Simultaneously, this material is also assumed to be a direct reflection of female gender (see Lucy 1997 for a detailed critique of this assumption).

In this paper I will argue that all these interpretations are based on a misunderstanding of the nature and role of material culture within Anglo-Saxon burial practices. I will first consider the development of ideas within the field of mortuary theory, looking at the impact which these have had on Anglo-Saxon archaeological interpretation. I will then demonstrate how the use of theories of social practice, such as the structuration theory of Anthony Giddens, can help to formulate a reconsideration of the meaning and significance of Anglo-Saxon cemetery material.

A Brief History of Burial Analysis

Until the 1960s, burials were regarded as closed contexts within which different material traits could be confidently associated. These contemporary groupings of objects were essential for the construction of chronologies, which perceived proto- and prehistory in terms of population movements and cultural diffusion (Chapman *et al.* 1981, 3). There were strong ideas expressed that archaeology could not give information about ideational schemes of societies,

but only about more mundane aspects of life, such as economy and technology (cf. Hawkes 1954). It could be argued that this approach is still used by many Anglo-Saxon archaeologists, although some have been notably more willing to discuss more ‘abstract’ issues such as pagan beliefs and human sacrifice (e.g. Hirst 1993; Wilson 1992), possibly due to the existence of later (mainly Christian) written sources which discuss ‘pagan’ myth and ritual.

The ‘processual’ archaeology which developed during the 1960s and 1970s, in reaction to the limitations of the culture-historical approach, disagreed with this viewpoint. Its proponents were optimistic about the ability of archaeology to shed light on past societies, arguing that mortuary practice was a system of communication designed to relay information about the dead person to the living community (Binford 1971; Saxe 1970; Tainter 1978). This was a strategy enabling the community to adapt to changes in society brought about by the death of a member (Thomas 1991, 104). The theory behind this approach rested on the idea that the treatment of the corpse depended on the marking out of a selection of the social identities which that person had held in life (Saxe 1970, 7). The number of the identities available to that person would have increased with the complexity of the social system. In a similar manner, the energy expended on that burial would have been proportional to the size of the group with responsibilities to that individual, and would thus have reflected their social rank or status within that society.

The combination of these two ideas resulted in the hypothesis that mortuary variability reflects the degree of organisational complexity of social systems (Binford 1971, 18; Barrett *et al.* 1991, 120), i.e. that the more variation found within the burial practices of a particular society, the more complex its social organisation was. These ideas were taken up by some Anglo-Saxon archaeologists. Arnold (1980) sought differences in the control of resources and wealth of various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms by analysing and comparing grave-goods in their pagan cemeteries. Similarly Hirst (1985, 97) stated that “it seems reason-

able to assume...that it is valid to compare the numbers and types of grave goods of whole cemeteries and to infer that the variations in these reflect differences in the wealth and power of the societies using the cemeteries”.

As one of the systems constituting society, a separate sphere of mortuary theory was developed, which dictated how this evidence should be interpreted (cf. Binford 1971; Chapman *et al.* 1981; Saxe 1970; Tainter 1978). Aspects of this mortuary theory were made use of by some Anglo-Saxon archaeologists in the 1980s (Arnold 1980, 1982, 1984, 1988; Hodges 1989), but given the general unpopularity of systems approaches within Anglo-Saxon archaeology, it was unsurprising that such uses remained limited. Most scholars in this field continued to use and interpret cemeteries as they always had done: as evidence for the progress of the Germanic migrations (Eagles 1979; Hawkes 1982, 1989a; Hunter Blair 1977; Myres 1986; Swanton 1973).

However, developments during the 1980s in prehistoric archaeology, in turn, criticised the systems approach for its limited view. A major criticism of Binford's work was that the symbolic representation which takes place at a funeral may not be direct or unambiguous, and that material culture patterning does not constitute a mirror image of social organisation (Barrett 1990, 181; Hodder 1982b, 141; Morris 1987, 38). Such critique led to broad discussions about the nature and role of ideology within mortuary practice, and also about the meanings of material culture.

Some archaeologists, notably those drawing on Neo-Marxist theory, saw ideology as a way of maintaining traditional authority by disguising and legitimating inequality (see Tarlow's 1992 critique of Parker Pearson 1982). The point was made that ways of doing things, such as burying people, do not have to directly reflect reality. Mourners can choose how they bury a person, and their choice can be motivated by the desire to hide or obscure that reality (Parker Pearson 1982). Others contested this view as simplistic, however (Johnson 1989, 195; Miller & Tilley 1984a; Pader 1982).

Possibly more fruitful were the symbolic and structural approaches which characterised much archaeology of the early 1980s. These have been seen as forcing a radical reappraisal of the nature of material culture, with it being seen as akin to language, with its own internal logic and meaning, and its ability to communicate (Hill pers. comm.). The attempts by Richards (1987), Brush (1988) and Pader (1982) to apply such approaches to Anglo-Saxon archaeology were innovative in the field. Richards concludes his major work on the form and decoration of cremation urns (1987, 205): “stylistic variability in Anglo-Saxon

pottery can operate on several levels. Different attributes are used to mark different aspects of social role. There is a sliding scale of visibility of these attributes, according to the size of the audience that the message is being broadcast to”. What was lacking from these accounts, however, was any sense of why such messages were important to their recipients – there was no consideration of the impact of mortuary ritual on the conditions of life, or of the role of the individual in transmitting, receiving or interpreting such messages.

Archaeologies of Social Practice

A recent development in archaeological interpretation has been that of social theory, specifically the application of structuration theories to archaeology. Such theories state that society is constituted of social practices and the actions of people, and that it cannot be analysed in any other way, such as in terms of economy, or environment, for example (Bourdieu 1977; Cohen 1989; Giddens 1979, 1981, 1984). This position involves an analytical framework within which the social actor is assumed to know a great deal about the ways in which society operates (although not necessarily in a discursive manner) and is thought to be more or less capable of reasserting, manipulating or transforming social rules within a given situation (Johnson 1989, 191).

These ideas have been heavily drawn upon by prehistoric archaeologists such as John Barrett, Koji Mizoguchi and Julian Thomas in their interpretations of mortuary evidence (Barrett 1988b, 1990; Mizoguchi 1993; Thomas 1991). These approaches have all stressed that burial is not a separate area, governed by its own theory (*contra* Binford 1971; Chapman *et al.* 1981; Saxe 1970) but, rather, is an essential part of human experience. This perspective rests on a specific conception of the nature of human society and the way that it operates. It is seen not as a static, fixed entity, but as a creation of the people who constitute it.

Social systems are seen as being constructed out of particular social practices, and those practices take place within the specific cultural and historical conditions they maintain (Barrett 1988b, 30; 1989a, 305). A dialectic thus exists between people's actions and the conditions of the world which they inhabit. People are competent and knowledgeable about their world, but at the same time their actions may be situated within unacknowledged conditions, and have unintended consequences (Shanks & Tilley 1987, 116). The actions of people create the societies in which they live (for there can be no society without

people), yet that society structures the very way that they act within it (Giddens 1984, 25). Giddens also makes the useful distinction between 'practical' knowledge, as a 'way of going on' in everyday, routine activities, 'discursive' knowledge, whereby individuals knowingly assign reasons and meanings to their actions, and unconscious sources of cognition and motivation (Giddens 1979; 1981, 27).

Ideology is seen as discursive knowledge which is called to mind to explain the world. It is thus a dominant discursive reading of key cultural values, a reading which is powerfully reproduced through ritual: "It is through ritual that particular traditions are given precise cultural definitions because ritual controls transitions between those conditions. Burial rituals enable the transition from life to death and by doing so they give an explicit cultural definition to the symbolism associated with this life: death opposition" (Barrett *et al.* 1991, 7). Although death is not an everyday occurrence, mortuary rituals are still among the strategic engagements through which people reproduce the conditions of their own lives (Barrett 1990, 182).

There is debate as to the relative importance of death and burial in different societies. Thomas, for example, sees mortuary practice (which includes burial) as an hegemonic practice which reproduces society and maintains relations of dominance, and which also provides a direct link between the manipulation of power and the representation of the human body (Thomas 1991, 140). Tarlow (1992), however, has stressed the role which emotion and grief, as well as the manipulation of power, plays in the human response to death. People, and the communities which they constitute, react in different ways to death. Indeed, as Thomas himself has pointed out, death and the dead may be of greatly different significance in different societies (1991, 104).

An important consequence of all these views is that mourners are seen as the active participants in burial practices (Barrett 1990, 182), and it is recognised that the dead do not participate in their own funerals. Rather, the treatment of the corpse is a powerful symbolic medium made use of by the mourners (Barrett 1988b, 30; Thomas 1991), and the purpose of the burial ritual is display (Barrett 1990, 186). Mizoguchi (1993, 224-225), following Thomas (1991), has gone so far as to view the corpses as being like "portable artefacts, carrying bundles of symbolic meanings". Such approaches have also meant that attention has been focused on the role of material culture within burial rites, as this is what symbolic meanings are often associated with.

The Implications for Anglo-Saxon Archaeology

The implications of this approach for Anglo-Saxon mortuary evidence are manifold. In previous analyses, it has almost been as if the corpse buried itself, with its favourite belongings. In the light of recent theoretical developments, however, it is the role of the mourners which comes to the fore. It cannot be the corpse who makes the decision as to what, if any, decorative metalwork to be buried with, or whether to take along a spear, shield or sword. It is the mourners who must make these decisions, along with deciding how deep or wide a grave to dig, in which direction it should point, where to position the grave in the landscape, and how to arrange the body and grave goods inside it.

Recent analyses of Anglo-Saxon mortuary practice have tended to work on a large scale, looking for patterns across wide areas of the country (Brush 1993; Härke 1989a, 1989b, 1990; Hines 1984). This follows in the footsteps of an earlier tradition of Anglo-Saxon archaeology which inferred large scale population movements and political developments through limited aspects of the archaeological evidence (Evison 1979; Kemble 1856, 1863; Leeds 1949; Myres 1969). All these approaches, past and present, rest on the assumption that aspects of material culture retain the same meanings and are always made use of in the same way in different areas, among different communities, and at different times. An example of this would be, say, to assume that a certain brooch style would suggest the same meanings when being worn by a living person in fifth century Kent, as it would when being included as a grave good in a burial in late sixth century Yorkshire.

Material culture is not a passive indicator of social features (such as age, sex, gender, class or ethnic affiliation), but is rather an active entity, which both helps to create and maintain such social groupings and divisions. Material symbols are negotiated and manipulated as part of strategies (conscious and otherwise) of individuals and groups (Hodder 1982b, 217). Because this manipulation is active, such symbols may be used to mark, exaggerate or contradict certain types of information flow and social relationships (*ibid.* 228). Thus, in line with the views on the structuration of society outlined above, "material culture does not so much reflect social conditions as participate in the restructuring and transformation of those conditions" (Barrett 1990, 179). Material culture is a set of resources which, firstly, guides actions upon the world, secondly, enables effective communicative action between both groups and individuals, and thirdly, allows monitoring of actions and the effect of them as the world is thereby transformed (*ibid.*).

Thus material culture is simultaneously actively creating and passively symbolic (Sørensen 1992, 36). It is an integral component of social life, being used to express, create and transform rules of meaning (Sørensen 1991, 121, Barrett 1991, 3). The meanings of objects themselves are not coincidental or arbitrary, but rather are given by their context (Hodder 1987; Sørensen 1987; 1991, 121). As objects are re-situated in different contexts, this meaning may therefore change accordingly (Barrett 1991, 3). Because material culture is non-verbal, its meaning is less distinctively defined. Objects and people therefore participate in a silent discourse, in which meanings may go unnoticed, but in which they may also be more profound (Damm 1991a, 179; 1991b, 130): the message "goes without saying because it comes without saying" (Bourdieu 1977, 167). It is therefore only possible to attempt to analyse the significance of goods in Anglo-Saxon burial rituals when viewed in detail in their local contexts. This involves examining how individual bodies are arranged in the ground, and how any objects positioned around them contribute to the overall visual effect. What is required is a detailed picture of a specific local ritual, rather than of general trends over a wide area.

A task of the archaeologist is thus to attempt to reconstruct past meanings of material culture, and the role that those meanings played in the way that society operated. However, what material culture actually meant to the people using it can never be reconstructed. It is only by looking closely at the contexts in which it was employed, that it is possible to see how it was used to structure social relations (Barrett 1987, 1988a, 1989a). As meaning is context dependent and subjective, a multiplicity of different meanings may be present (Hodder 1986). As Barrett (1991, 6) states: "The material evidence does not exist as the mute record of a past society, but exists as the fragmentary remains of worlds once inhabited by speaking and acting humans, who used those material conditions to structure and defend certain traditions of discourse". Use in different contexts by different people will create different meanings. For effective communication to take place, however, there must be general, if unspoken, agreement between the people involved in that discourse as to the significance of that material culture, and it is only this general meaning which the archaeologist can hope to recover.

The advantage which the archaeologist does have in this respect is a long time-frame in which to work. By observing change in the local contexts of archaeological evidence, a picture can be built up of developments over a wider area, and over time, contributing to the reproduction of the social system (Barrett

1988b, 30). Such change should be expected, as society, and thus the role of material culture, is never static, but continually evolving. It is possible, however, that such change may be obscured, possibly because of the role that traditional authority or other forms of ideology may play (Parker Pearson 1982).

Conclusions

To sum up, I can do no better than to quote John Barrett in full: "Material culture represents the material universe which was partially available for humans to draw upon as a medium for action. It is thus both the conditions for actions and the results of action. As such material culture is also the medium of discourse (the code) by which social relations are negotiated and reproduced: it is meaningful. That meaning would have been known to the people involved in that discourse, although their subjective knowledge of the code will have varied. Archaeologists cannot recover that particular subjectivity. However an understanding of the code is possible if we think through the specific contexts (i.e. relationships) which the material code structured in a particular discourse. Such an understanding constitutes historical knowledge and we are able to perceive the reproduction and transformation of the code" (Barrett 1989, 305).

Decoration and treatment of the corpse in the burial ritual thus presents an ideal opportunity for the production and reproduction of society, as funerals mark events where social roles are publicly renewed, reinforced and reclassified (Damm 1991b, 130), and the associated material culture provides an extremely visible and effective way of contributing to that reproduction. Burials represent an element in social discourse, but they do not necessarily reflect social organisation. Instead, they show aspects of that organisation being contested and rearranged in different ways (*ibid.*). That social discourse is conducted entirely by the mourners. The corpse is a passive vehicle for their active use of material culture.

The implications of these views for Anglo-Saxon archaeology are extensive. If material culture is active, it cannot be assumed to simply reflect social categories such as gender, ethnicity, status or age. Rather, it must be recognised that any social groupings which are distinguished by the use of material culture in burial were an active creation of the mourners, who felt it important to make those distinctions. Changes in the archaeological evidence through time and between areas should be viewed in this light, rather than be seen to represent static ethnic or other social groupings, as has been the case (with

the notable exception of Pader 1982) in most previous analyses of Anglo-Saxon burial archaeology.

References

- ARNOLD C. 1980: Wealth and Social Structure: A matter of life and death, in: Rahtz *et al.*, 81-142.
- ARNOLD C.J. 1982: Stress as a stimulus to socio-economic change: England in the seventh century, in Renfrew & Shennan (eds.), 124-131.
- ARNOLD C.J. 1984: *Roman Britain to Saxon England*, London.
- ARNOLD C.J. 1988: *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, London.
- BARRETT J.C. 1987: Contextual archaeology, *Antiquity* 61, 468-473.
- BARRETT J.C. 1988a: Fields of Discourse: reconstituting a social archaeology, *Critique of Anthropology* 7(3), 5-16.
- BARRETT J.C. 1988b: The living, the dead, and the ancestors: Neolithic and early Bronze Age mortuary practices, in: Barrett & Kinnes (eds.), 30-41.
- BARRETT J.C. 1989: Food, Gender and Metal: Questions of Social Reproduction, in: Sørensen & Thomas (eds.), 304-320.
- BARRETT J.C. 1990: The Monumentality of Death: the character of early Bronze Age mortuary mounds in Southern Britain, *World Archaeology* 22 (2), 179-189.
- BARRETT J.C., BRADLEY R. & GREEN M. 1991: *Landscape, Monuments and Society: The Pre-history of Cranbourne Chase*, Cambridge.
- BARRETT J.C. & KINNES I.A. (eds.) 1988: *The Archaeology of Context in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages*, Sheffield.
- BINFORD L. 1971: Mortuary practices, their study and potential, in: Brown (ed.), 6-29.
- BOURDIEU P. 1977: *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge.
- BROWN J.A. (ed.) 1971: *Approaches to the social dimensions of mortuary practices*, Society for American Archaeology Memoir No 25.
- BRUSH K. 1988: Gender and Mortuary Analysis in Pagan Anglo-Saxon Archaeology, *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 7 (1), 76-89.
- BRUSH K. 1993: *Adorning the Dead: The Social Significance of Early Anglo-Saxon Funerary Dress in England (Fifth to Seventh Centuries AD)*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge.
- CARVER M. (ed.) 1993: *In Search of Cult – Archaeological Investigations in Honour of Philip Rahtz*, Woodbridge.
- CHAPMAN R., KINNES I. & RANDSBORG K. (eds.) 1981: *The Archaeology of Death*, Cambridge.
- COHEN I. 1989: *Structuration Theory: Anthony Giddens and the constitution of social life*, London.
- COLGRAVE B. & MYNORS R. 1969: *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Oxford.
- DAMM C. 1991a: Burying the Past: An example of social transformation in the Danish Neolithic, in: Garwood *et al.* (eds.), 43-49.
- DAMM C. 1991b: From Burials to Gender Roles: Problems and Potentials in Post-Processual Archaeology, in: Walde & Willows (eds.), 130-134.
- EAGLES B.N. 1979: *The Anglo-Saxon Settlement of Humberside*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 68, Oxford.
- EVISON V.I. 1979: *Wheel-thrown Pottery in Anglo-Saxon Graves*, Leeds, Royal Archaeological Institute.
- GARWOOD P., JENNINGS D., SKEATES R. & TOMS J. (eds.) 1991: *Sacred and Profane: Proceedings of a Conference on Archaeology, Ritual and Religion, Oxford 1989*, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph 32, Oxford.
- GIDDENS A. 1979: *Central Problems in Social Theory*, London.
- GIDDENS A. 1981: *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, London.
- GIDDENS A. 1984: *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Cambridge.
- HÄRKE H. 1989a: Early Saxon weapon burials: frequencies, distributions and weapon combinations, in: Hawkes (ed.), 49-61.
- HÄRKE H. 1989b: Knives in early Saxon burials: Blade length and age at death, *Medieval Archaeology* 33, 144-148.
- HÄRKE H. 1990: Warrior Graves? The background of the Anglo-Saxon weapon burial rite, *Past and Present* 126, 22-43.
- HAWKES C.F.C. 1954: Archaeological theory and method: Some suggestions from the old world, *American Anthropologist* (n.s.) 56, 155-168.
- HAWKES S. 1982: Anglo-Saxon Kent c. 425-725, in: Leach (ed.), 64-78.
- HAWKES S. 1989a: The South-East Coast after the Romans: the Saxon Settlement, in: Maxfield (ed.), 78-95.
- HAWKES S.C. (ed.) 1989b: *Weapons and Warfare in Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph 21, Oxford.
- HINES J. 1984: *The Scandinavian Character of England in the pre-Viking Period*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 124, Oxford.
- HIRST S. 1985: *An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Sewerby*, York University Archaeological Publications 4, York.

- HIRST S. 1993: Death and the Archaeologist, in: Carver (ed.), 41-43.
- HODDER I. (ed.) 1982a: *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology*, Cambridge.
- HODDER I. 1982b: *Symbols in Action: ethnoarchaeological studies of material culture*, Cambridge.
- HODDER I. 1986: *Reading the Past: current approaches to interpretation in archaeology*, Cambridge.
- HODDER I. (ed.) 1987: *The Archaeology of Contextual Meanings*, Cambridge.
- HODGES R. 1989: *Dark Age Economics: the origins of towns and trade AD 600-1000*, London.
- HUNTER BLAIR P. 1977: *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England*, Cambridge (2nd Edition).
- JOHNSON M.H. 1989: Conceptions of Agency in Archaeological Interpretation, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 8, 189-211.
- KEMBLE J.M. 1856: On Mortuary Urns found at Stade-on-the-Elbe, and other parts of North Germany, now in the Museum of the Historical Society of Hannover, *Archaeologia* XXVI, 270-283.
- KEMBLE J.M. 1863: *Horae Ferales; or Studies in Archaeology of the Northern Nations*, London.
- LEACH P. (ed.) 1982: *Archaeology in Kent to AD 1500*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 48, London.
- LEEDS E.T. 1949: *A Corpus of Early Anglo-Saxon Great Square-Headed Brooches*, Oxford.
- LUCY S.J. 1997: Housewives, Warriors and Slaves? Sex and Gender in Anglo-Saxon Burials, in: J. MOORE & E. SCOTT (eds.), *Invisible People and Processes: Writing Gender and Childhood into European Archaeology*, Leicester, 150-168.
- MAXFIELD V.A. (ed.) 1989: *The Saxon Shore: a handbook*, Studies in History 25, Exeter.
- MILLER D. & TILLEY C. (eds.) 1984a: *Ideology, Power and Prehistory*, Cambridge.
- MILLER D. & TILLEY C. 1984b: Ideology, Power and Prehistory: an introduction, in: Miller & Tilley (eds.) 1984a, 1-15.
- MIZOGUCHI K. 1993: Time in the reproduction of mortuary practices, *World Archaeology* 25 (2), 223-235.
- MORRIS I. 1987: *Burial and Ancient Society – The rise of the Greek city-state*, Cambridge.
- MYRES J.N.L. 1969: *Anglo-Saxon Pottery and the Settlement of England*, Oxford.
- MYRES J.N.L. 1986: *The English Settlements*, Oxford.
- PADER E-J. 1982: *Symbolism, Social Relations and the Interpretation of Mortuary Remains*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 130, Oxford.
- PARKER PEARSON M. 1982: Mortuary practices, society and ideology: an ethnoarchaeological study, in: Hodder (ed.) 1982a, 99-114.
- RAHTZ P., DICKINSON T. & WATTS L. 1980: *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries 1979*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 82, Oxford.
- RENFREW C. & SHENNAN S. (eds.) 1982: *Ranking, resource and exchange*, Cambridge.
- RICHARDS J.D. 1987: *The Significance of Form and Decoration of Anglo-Saxon Cremation Urns*, British Archaeological Reports British Series 166, Oxford.
- SAXE A.A. 1970: *Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices*, PhD Dissertation, University of Michigan.
- SCHIFFER M. (ed.) 1978: *Archaeological Advances in Method and Theory Vol. 1*, New York.
- SHANKS M. & TILLEY C. 1987: *Social Theory and Archaeology*, Cambridge.
- SØRENSEN M.L.S. 1987: Material order and cultural classification: The role of bronze objects in the transition from Bronze Age to Iron Age in Scandinavia, in: Hodder (ed.), 90-101.
- SØRENSEN M.L.S. 1991: The Construction of Gender through Appearance, in: Walde & Willows (eds.), 121-129.
- SØRENSEN M.L.S. 1992: Gender Archaeology and Scandinavian Bronze Age Studies, *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 25 (1), 31-49.
- SØRENSEN M.L.S. & THOMAS R. (eds.) 1989: *The Bronze Age - Iron Age Transition in Europe*, British Archaeological Reports International Series 483, Oxford.
- SWANTON M.J. 1973: *The Spearheads of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, London, Royal Archaeological Institute.
- TAINTER J.A. 1978: Mortuary practices and the study of prehistoric social systems, in: Schiffer (ed.), 105-141.
- TARLOW S. 1992: Each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds, *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 11 (1), 125-140.
- THOMAS J. 1991: *Rethinking the Neolithic*, Cambridge.
- WALDE D. & WILLOWS N.D. 1991: *The Archaeology of Gender Proceedings of the 22nd Chacmool Conference*, Calgary.
- WILSON D. 1992: *Anglo-Saxon Paganism*, London.

Dr. Sam Lucy
Department of Archaeology
University of Durham
46 Saddler Street
Durham DH1 3NU
UK

Andrew Reynolds

The Definition and Ideology of Anglo-Saxon Execution Sites and Cemeteries

This paper is concerned with a previously neglected, yet highly distinctive, class of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries; those which received the burials of malefactors and others denied interment in the normal community burial places. The period covered runs from the conversion of the English to Christianity until shortly after the Norman Conquest, that is from the 7th to 11th centuries. The first part of the paper considers the nature of execution cemeteries and their landscape context. The second part attempts to find a contemporary philosophical context for the sites and argues that segregation of wrongdoers from the community at death was a Christian phenomenon and that the siting and terminology of execution sites, and other judicial processes, is founded on a firmly biblical ideology.*

Introduction, Sources and Approaches

Research into the nature of the OE judicial system remains almost exclusively the preserve of constitutional historians and the summary presented here attempts to show how an archaeological approach can shed much new light on the subject in hand.

The sources for judicial studies are varied, although none provides a continuous narrative for the Anglo-Saxon period. The research outlined here began with a search of the full range of sources for the period in an attempt to understand the organisation of the OE judicial system in physical and ideological terms.

The earliest laws are those of the Kentish kings of the 7th century and were apparently issued sporadically by other rulers after the appearance of the near contemporary, and in certain respects closely comparable, codes of Wihtred of Kent (690-725) and Ine of Wessex (688-726). The substantial and detailed laws of Alfred of Wessex (871-899) provide the next surviving text, although the preamble tells us that, among other sources, such as Aethelberht's code of

c.600, Alfred saw fit to follow the example of Offa of Mercia's (757-796) code, which is now lost (although see Wormald 1991). From the issue of Alfred's code, however, it became customary for English kings to issue laws; a practice which continued until the reign of Cnut (1014-1035). In their classic work *The History of English Law Before the Time of Edward I*, Pollock and Maitland noted of the laws that they '...assume knowledge on the readers part of an indefinite mass of received custom and practice.' (1895, 26). More recently Patrick Wormald has described the laws as '...something in the nature of minutes of what was orally decreed rather than statute law in their own right.' (1978, 48) and, in short, it appears that the picture presented by such texts is necessarily limited. What they do tell us, however, is that the Kentish people, and probably most others (Hunter Blair 1963, 244), possessed a complex system of customary law by c.600 and that the Kentish codes were written down almost certainly has more to do with the early conversion to Christianity of King Aethelberht than with the existence of a more developed legal system there than elsewhere. Considering the quantity of cemetery data available for the late 6th and 7th centuries it seemed right to begin the search for the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon law in the latest pagan cemeteries and some analyses are presented in brief below.

The poetic and prose sources frequently provide valuable, often incidental, evidence for the nature of the OE judicial system. References to the process, machinery or location of execution are present in a range of texts including the poems *Beowulf*, *Juliana* and the *Dream of the Rood*, but also frequently in the perambulations of Anglo-Saxon estates appended to grants of land. The potential of a study of Anglo-Saxon charter boundaries for the location of judicial execution sites was first noted by Shaw in his great two-volume work, *The History and Antiquities of Staffordshire* published between 1798 and 1801. Shaw

* Abbreviations: OE = Old English; S103 = Catalogue No. in Sawyer 1968

presented for the first time the text of a grant of land at Wetmoor, Staffordshire, dated 1012 (S930), and commented on the occurrence of the OE term *peofa hangan* (thieves hanging place) in the bounds. He went on to record the fact that in his time the place was known as Gallows Flat and Gallows Lane and that the site lay near the town of Burton (Shaw 1798, 20). Similarly, the bounds of Tyburn, Middlesex, (S903) record the *ealdan werhrode* (old criminals cross/gallows) in 1002. The Tyburn gallows, perhaps the most famous execution place of post-medieval England, clearly had its origins in the Anglo-Saxon period when the site was already described as 'old'. Executions were finally stopped in 1783 when the gallows were moved to Newgate (Gatrell 1994, 96). This is a fine example of long-term continuity of function from the Anglo-Saxon period until Early Modern times; there can be few OE boundary marks named according to an activity that can demonstrate such clear continuity of function.

A number of issues are raised by the charters. The majority were issued in the middle decades of the 10th century and, although the geographical distribution of charter bounds is biased towards central Wessex, the boundaries provide a substantial snapshot of the organisation and terminology of 10th-century execution (Hill 1981, Map 35 and Table 36). When dealing with classes of boundary marks, it is often difficult to be sure whether given marks occurred elsewhere in the landscape or were restricted to boundaries. In the case of the execution cemeteries the latter situation seemed instinctively more likely and work on the landscape context of excavated execution sites has borne out this assumption (see below). In this context, it is worth noting that when the late 8th- or early 9th-century St Juliana is led out for her execution, it is '...close to the border of the country...' that she is taken (Bradley 1982, 317). The evidence from the laws, charters and poetry combined provides an almost continuous body of documentary evidence, albeit not of the same emphasis, from the 7th to the 11th centuries. It describes an established system of execution sites and tells us that they were located on principal boundaries. This leaves the archaeological evidence to be clarified and tested against the backdrop of the documentary sources.

In general terms, it is perceived that by the first quarter of the 8th century pagan burial practices had ceased, and that burial took place in the churchyards established by or dependent on Minster churches. There is much to indicate that the process of change from pagan to Christian type burial was a complex one and the chronology of the conversion could be plausibly extended, but cemetery studies as a whole are usually concerned with sites of a similar date or

type and chronological studies of cemetery development throughout the Anglo-Saxon period are still in their infancy. This is not the place to consider the origins of churchyard cemeteries, but the process is associated with the origins of execution sites and cemeteries.

Detailed study of execution sites and their landscape contexts has indicated that burial places specifically for wrongdoers were being established in the 7th century. The archaeological evidence has been weighed against that from OE prose and poetic texts, and a narrative for the origins and development of the burial places of social outcasts is here proposed.

Defining Execution Sites

The interpretation of deviant burials present in pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries is contentious. The note 'Crime and punishment in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery?', published by Sonia Hawkes and Calvin Wells in 1975, was the first serious consideration of deviant burials in Early Anglo-Saxon contexts and the debate is best followed in the spate of papers concerned with the topic, published in the wake of Sue Hirst's report on the Sewerby cemetery, East Yorkshire, and its unusual burials, which appeared in 1985 (summarised in Hirst 1993, but see also Geake 1992 and Knusel *et al.* 1996).

Two features in particular have attracted comment from scholars in recent years: prone burial and pathological evidence for trauma (cf. Wilson 1992 and Wenham 1989). Prone burials present incontrovertible evidence that the individual so interred was viewed very differently from other members of the community. The only Early Medieval reference to the practice, however, comes from Merovingian Gaul and describes how King Pepin the Short (d. 768) was buried face down on account of the sins committed by his father (Salin 1952, 220-222). Recent research has explained the practice in terms of continuity from the Late Roman period, which is perhaps understandable given the number of superficial comparisons that can be made between Late Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon burial rites (cf. Harman, Molleson & Price 1981). Such is the problem beset by most commentators; the overriding tendency is to look to the Late Roman past for parallels for Early Anglo-Saxon deviant burial practices rather than to consider how such practices were manifest in the later part of the Anglo-Saxon period.

Recent research by the writer has suggested that prone burials were in origin very much a 6th- and 7th-century phenomenon among the English and it is suggested that this reflects the origins of prone burial as a mark of shame for convicted offenders within the

context of early state formation and developing institutions. A search for prone burials in pagan cemeteries located seventy-one examples against the '...fifty or so...' noted by David Wilson in his recent survey of the practice, which also made no mention of the later Anglo-Saxon examples (Wilson 1992, 80).

The practice then continued unbroken from the Conversion up until the 11th century, but now in new locations away from the normal community cemeteries, where offenders had been accepted in the pagan period. An exception to this rule is provided by the prone burials from the monastic chapel at Beckery, Somerset. Here, in an all-male cemetery, the bodies of six Mid-Late Anglo-Saxons were found and interpreted as the burials of individuals who had committed mortal sins or who were experiencing some form of penance (Rahtz & Hirst 1974, 33; Rahtz 1993, 120-121).

Beheading, on the other hand, is present in the earliest Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. At Alfriston, Sussex, for example, the skull of the 5th-century male in Grave 26 was missing from the deeply cut grave (Griffith & Salzmann 1914, 35) suggesting decapitation at or after death, as opposed to loss by animal disturbance or some other destructive agency. It is of interest to note that beheadings in Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are normally not associated with careless burials, whereas the prone burials frequently are.

Pathological evidence for trauma is the other major characteristic, pursued with interest by osteologists when sorting large cemetery groups. This can provide evidence of specific punishments, some of which are described in the earliest West Saxon laws of Ine, dated 688 x 694 (Attenborough 1922, 34; I18 and I37). Removal of hands and feet is recorded in the archaeological record in a few instances, including the 7th-century male in Grave D7 at Totternhoe, Bedfordshire, who had his right hand cut off, the probably 6th-century male from Grave 32 at Westgarth Gardens, Suffolk, buried minus his left hand and the 6th-century woman from Loveden Hill, Lincolnshire, whose feet had been amputated (Matthews 1962-4, 31; West 1988, 29; Meaney 1964, 158-9). The laws of Ine and later codes often record such specific punishments and it seems likely that such penalties are rooted in tribal custom first recorded shortly after the arrival of the Church.

The earliest published comments on the evidence for their being specific execution cemeteries came in the form of Gray Hill's report on his excavations at the type site of Stockbridge Down, Hampshire (Hill 1937). A description of this site is sufficient to introduce the principal characteristics of the archaeological evidence, although a range of further examples are also considered.

The execution site at Stockbridge Down lies high up on the chalk downland of north-west Hampshire. Excavations in the late 1930's revealed part of a cemetery with 43 burials being uncovered (Hill 1937); the site was not associated with a church. Finds gave a mid-11th-century date (in the form of two coins of Edward the Confessor for which the latest date of use has been put at 1065: Dolley 1957; Blackburn & Pagan 1986, No. 251) and the burials lay disposed at all angles. Many of the corpses displayed signs of pathological trauma and had been buried in unusual positions. A total of seventeen individuals, one of which had been decapitated, had their hands tied together with two-thirds of them behind the back. Overall, two individuals had been decapitated and there were six prone burials. The burials were all of adult males from youths to old age. Other features recorded were two large square postholes set a short distance apart at the south-west edge of the site and an artificial flat-topped mound at the north-east edge.

The excavator interpreted the remains as an execution site and placed it firmly in the historical context of harsh lawmaking by either William Rufus or Henry I (Hill 1937, 259), despite the earlier date of the coins. Importantly, Hill drew comparisons with the sites at Meon Hill, Hampshire, which only lies 3 km to the west (Liddell 1933), Roche Court Down on the Wiltshire side of the border with Hampshire (Stone 1932) and Old Sarum, Wiltshire (Blackmore 1894). He went on to note that such sites could only have operated under Royal consent or direction and commented on the location of all four along the Winchester-Salisbury highway (Hill 1937, 258). As well as similarities in the treatment of the corpses, Meon Hill and Roche Court Down were both located on pre-existing linear earthworks (Roche Court Down is sited on a prominent eminence along the earthwork) and the Old Sarum burials were secondary interments in a prehistoric barrow.

A search for similar sites was undertaken by the writer using combinations of the characteristics presented above. Misinterpretation of sites, both pre- and post- Stockbridge Down, has hampered their recognition as a clearly defined group. There are many examples to draw upon, but the examples cited below give a fair guide to the range of interpretations offered on the same types of evidence.

During the Pitt-Rivers' excavation of the monumental neolithic Wor Barrow in Dorset, several groups of skeletons displaying unusual characteristics were found; one lay centrally on top of the mound, whilst the other groups lay in the ditches surrounding the barrow at either end (Pitt Rivers 1898, pl. 249). Seventeen secondary inhumations were recorded, one was

buried prone, eight were without heads and three were probably buried contemporaneously. These secondary burials were dated by residual sherds of Roman pottery and the site was seen as '...a place of execution in Roman times.' (Pitt Rivers 1898, 79). The site lies on a hundred boundary; the name may in fact be a corruption of OE *wearg beorg* (criminals barrow) and brings to mind another Dorset place-name Worgret or *wearg rod* (criminals cross/gallows) (Ekwall 1960, 534). G.B. Grundy's commentary on the charter bounds of Handley Do (S630) proposed that the *Pegan Beorh* (Pega's Barrow) mentioned therein was to be equated with the present Wor Barrow (Grundy 1936-37, 116). Leslie Grinsell has accepted this identification (Grinsell 1991, 50), although the number of barrows in the vicinity makes this assumption less than certain.

In the 1920's Gerald Dunning and Mortimer Wheeler undertook the total excavation of a prominent round barrow on the chalk downland overlooking Dunstable, Bedfordshire (Dunning & Wheeler 1931), one of a group known as the Five Knolls. The latest phase of activity was represented by ninety-four secondary burials and was dated to the Roman or pagan Anglo-Saxon period on the basis of a small number of residual finds. There were three decapitated individuals, three prone burials and twenty-seven corpses with the hands tied behind the back; a few triple graves were present.

At Walkington Wold, East Yorkshire, the latest phase comprised twelve secondary burials cut into a round barrow of which ten had been decapitated (Bartlett & Mackey 1972). The graves were disposed at all angles. There was one triple burial and one possible instance of tied hands. The skulls were buried separately, some as a 'nest', near the centre of the mound. The lack of mandibles for some of the skulls indicates decomposition before burial and may provide archaeological evidence for the *wearh rihtan stoc* (stake where criminals are seen to be righted) (S430), *Kalewan stoc* (stake for the display of skulls) (S501) and *heafod stocum* (headstakes) mentioned in charter boundaries and other sources such as the *Old English Life of St Christopher* (Rypins 1924, 161). The burials were not closely datable, but the evidence suggests a date between the end of the Roman period and the beginning of the later middle ages. The excavators interpreted the site as a late Roman or Early Anglo-Saxon execution cemetery.

The recent discoveries at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, revealed two groups of unusual burials (Carver 1992). Group 1 lay at the eastern edge of the excavated area and contained twenty-three burials, five were prone, two lay in a kneeling position, three were buried in coffins, one was accompanied by a joint of meat and

another buried in an extraordinary 'ploughing' position. The concern for certain of the burials supports the excavator's provisional interpretation of the group as sacrificial victims. Group 2, however, was associated with Mound 5 and lay variously disposed about the east and south sides of the mound. There were sixteen corpses, three of which were buried prone, one lay bent over backwards in an identical manner to burials from Roche Court Down, Wiltshire, and South Acre, Norfolk (Stone 1932, pl. 1, skeleton 17; Whymer 1996, pl. XIX), and the remains of an organic collar were found around the neck of another. A parish boundary runs through the site, which, when taken into consideration with the barrow association and the lack of care for any of the burials, strongly suggests that a judicial interpretation is best suited to the evidence.

The execution site at Guildown, Surrey, lies high on chalk downland overlooking the town of Guildford. Excavations in the 1920's uncovered a substantial part of a large Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery which became the location of the largest later Anglo-Saxon execution cemetery yet found (Lowther 1931). In total, there were one-hundred and forty-three execution burials, with many examples of triple interment and a large number intercutting graves. There were five examples of decapitation and six of prone burial; forty-four corpses were buried with the hands tied. There was no surviving evidence to suggest the presence of a barrow at the site, although the large area devoid of disturbance around the Early Anglo-Saxon Grave 139 (Lowther 1931, Fig. facing p. 1) may indicate the former presence of a mound. A coin of Edward the Confessor with one of the burials provides a date of c. 1043 and the excavator correctly interpreted the evidence as an execution site of the later Anglo-Saxon period, although it was suggested that some of the burials may have resulted from Earl Godwin's massacre at Guildford in 1036 (Lowther 1931, 33).

The most recent publication of a modern excavation of an execution site is that at South Acre Norfolk. There, a series of ring-ditches seen on aerial photographs led to rescue excavations at the site. Over one-hundred and thirty burials were found associated with the largest of a group of six ring-ditches (Whymer 1996). Soil conditions were not conducive to preservation of bone, although detailed recording established the most important details. There were a few triple burials and many intercutting graves. Eight individuals had been decapitated, two appeared to have tied hands, although there were probably more. The site lay near the boundaries of three hundreds and was correctly interpreted as an execution site of the later Anglo-Saxon period. Two radiocarbon determinations

were obtained which gave the following results: 1710 \pm 90 BP (68% cal AD 220 to cal AD 420, 95% cal AD 80 to cal AD 550) and 1150 \pm 70 BP (68% cal AD 800 to cal AD 950 to cal AD 1020).

In summary, the characteristics of execution sites can be divided into two types: internal characteristics which refer to the nature of individual burials, and external characteristics which describe the topography and associations of the site. Internal characteristics include shallow and undersized graves, random orientation, intercutting graves, prone and decapitated corpses, instances of tied hands and some few but consistent finds of low-status dress fittings. External characteristics are associations with earthworks, overwhelmingly barrows, intervisibility with important settlements and routeways together with location on, or adjacent to, principal boundaries, usually of hundreds. In Fred Aldsworth's report on the Early Anglo-Saxon burials at Droxford, Hampshire, the author commented on the proximity of the site to the mentions of a heathen burial place in the three sets of Droxford charter bounds (S276; S446; S600) (Aldsworth 1979, 175). In his inspired efforts to demonstrate that the heathen burial places mentioned in charter bounds referred to execution burials, as opposed to long closed pagan cemeteries, Aldsworth plotted the excavated execution cemeteries and heathen burial place boundary marks in Hampshire onto a map of hundred boundaries (Aldsworth 1979, 176 and Fig. 53). There was a clear correlation between the two types of evidence in that the sites all lay on hundred boundaries. The hundred was the judicial territory in Late Anglo-Saxon England and it seems that felons and others precluded burial in consecrated ground (such as suicides and the unbaptised) were literally taken to the edge of the territory to be executed and buried.

Discussion

The search for the origins of the English judicial system must begin in the Early Anglo-Saxon period. The complete breakdown of social administration in the late 4th and early 5th century is a widely accepted phenomenon (Loyn 1984, 3) and would have included the disappearance of the judicial apparatus. The initial period of Anglo-Saxon settlement and assimilation with the native population is unlikely to have seen any systems of social regulation beyond kin-based hierarchies within individual tribes or bands. The process of state formation, however, which probably had its origins early in the migration period, and consolidation, which occurred from the later 6th and 7th centuries (Bassett 1989), would have seen the

genesis of the institutions necessary for the maintenance and governance of distinct political units. Such institutions would have included means for the punishment of those who contravened the accepted norms of society. The precise mechanics of these embryonic judicial systems are hard to establish, but the existence of a developed tariff of offences and atonements in Kent at the beginning of the 7th century certainly implies the operation of a refined customary legal system in the pre-Christian 6th century.

On a local level certain punishments and deviant burial practices continued after the Conversion to Christianity. This is clearly shown by the finding of prone burials, decapitations and loss of extremities in inhumation burials throughout the period. The burial of Early Anglo-Saxon wrongdoers within the community cemetery appears to have been standard practice prior to Conversion. There are no examples of cemeteries datable to the 5th or 6th centuries which contain predominantly deviant burials.

Within the context of the Conversion, new burial sites for non-Christians (heathens) were being established in the 7th century. The earliest examples of actual execution cemeteries are, seemingly, 7th-century in date and include Sutton Hoo Suffolk, South Acre Norfolk and Old Dairy Cottage Hampshire (Nenk, Margeson & Hurley 1991, 157-158). The latter site has allowed a model to be proposed for the origins of execution sites based upon a study of adjacent cemeteries and boundaries (Reynolds forthcoming). Overall, the model allows for long-term continuity of individual deviant burial practices at a local level whilst accommodating fundamental change in their location.

The Winchester Model

Two successive Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, known as Winnall I and Winnall II, 1 km to the north-east of the historic city centre of Winchester, have been interpreted as an archaeological manifestation of the arrival of Christianity amongst the West Saxons in the earlier 7th century (Meaney & Hawkes 1970). In particular, Winnall II displays many of the characteristics common to late pagan or early Christian burial grounds of the so-called 'Final Phase' type most recently reviewed by Boddington (Boddington 1990). It has been suggested that the influence of Christianity on the populations around Winchester in the mid-7th-century is likely to have been strong and that the Winnall II cemetery would have been closed relatively quickly as the Old Minster grew more powerful, in tandem with the rise to pre-eminence of Winchester as a central place in the West Saxon kingdom

(Meaney & Hawkes 1970, 58). The small, probably private, cemetery at Lower Brook Street was also apparently closed at the end of the 7th century (Hawkes 1990, 627). The Winnall II cemetery contained a few deviant burials (Graves 11, 23, 35 and 46) which indicates that wrongdoers were buried within the community cemetery until at least the middle of the 7th century. New evidence from the locality, however, suggests that the influence of Christianity extended further than previously thought.

A group of deviant burials, bearing the characteristics of an execution site, from Old Dairy Cottage Hampshire has been dated by finds to the 7th century (Nenk, Margeson & Hurley 1991, 157-158) and the cemetery provides the final component for an understanding of the origins of execution sites in Anglo-Saxon England. The burial group consisted of thirteen graves containing up to eighteen individuals with examples of tied hands, decapitation and prone burial. There were some intercutting graves indicating extended use of the cemetery. The site lies on the boundary between Chilcomb Hundred and the estate at Easton and it has been plausibly suggested that the ancient Chilcomb estate, which later became a hundred, represents the 7th-century *territorium* of Winchester (Biddle 1976, 256-257). The Winchester cemeteries indicate that at the same time as the 'Final Phase' cemeteries closed, execution sites were opening.

The earliest surviving law to state that certain offenders were to be prohibited burial in consecrated ground is cap. 26 of Aethelstan's (924-939) second law code (Attenborough 1922). Based upon the Winchester evidence, and the likelihood that the written Anglo-Saxon laws recorded a small fraction of the amount of legislation in common usage, it appears that Christianity did exclude the un-baptised, the excommunicated and convicted or executed criminals from their new burial grounds established at Minster churches, such as Winchester Old Minster, in the 7th and 8th centuries and that later laws reflect earlier custom.

The Ideology of Anglo-Saxon Execution Cemeteries

The frequent use of the word *rod*, or rood, as meaning 'gallows' in OE charter boundaries led to an appraisal of the characteristics of the cemetery sites which revealed other instances of Christian symbolism, imagery or terminology. Of particular interest was the realisation that continuity was possible from the pagan period.

The representation of the deity as suffering the fate of a criminal would have been no new concept for the English undergoing conversion, for Woden himself was known widely in northern mythology as

the 'hanging god'. The poem *Havamal*, for example, describes Woden as hanging in the World Tree, the ash *Yggdrasill*, pierced with a spear (Ellis Davidson 1964, 143). Similarly, the late 9th-century or later poem *Dream of the Rood* describes the experiences of the Holy Rood on a journey; one of these is as a gallows for the execution of common felons before being set up upon a hill for the execution of Christ (Bradley 1982, 161). The Blickling Homilist of the later 10th century describes the place of Christ's execution as *rode-galgan*, translated in the Early English Texts Society edition by Morris as rood-tree (Morris 1880, 96-97). Literally translated, however, the terms mean rood-gallows, with *galgan* representing a slight mis-spelling of the OE *gealga*.

In the charter boundaries the term rood, or crucifix, is used in combination with a number of terms to describe execution sites. For example, the *headdan rode* (heathen-cross), of the Pucklechurch, Gloucestershire, bounds (S553), of 950, is a contradiction in terms, whereas the *warrode* of the Buckland Newton, Dorset, bounds (S347) of 891 and the *wearh roda* of the Stanton St Bernard, Wiltshire (S647) bounds of 957 are derived from *wearg-rod* (criminals cross). Furthermore, *wearg* is the term used in the OE Bible to describe the criminals executed with Christ and is evidenced fifteen times in the charter bounds as part of a description of an execution site.

Examples in both the poetic and prose texts provide clear evidence that the terminology of judicial execution sites was interchangeable with that found in religious texts. It could be proposed that descriptions of the death of Christ in Old English documents are likely to use contemporary terminology, but the physical characteristics of the identified execution sites suggests that the matter is rather more of a conscious issue. The grain of the evidence points towards a close relationship between the deity and the criminal in certain forms of representations.

The concepts involved in particular methods of execution are complex and varied. Crucifixion and decapitation were methods of execution in the Roman world whereas hanging is very much a Germanic punishment. This factor is further evidence for continuity from the pagan period. The ideological concepts underlying hanging, however, would have been perfectly suited to the requirements of the Church. In the Gunpowder Plot judgement of 1606, for example, Sir Edward Coke expressed that the convicted should be '...hanged up by the neck between heaven and earth, as deemed unworthy of both, or either.' (Howell & Howell 1809, 184; quoted in Gatrell 1994, 315).

The choice of location, as well as the motivation, for the new execution cemeteries seems also to have been strongly influenced by Christian imagery. The

common choice of prehistoric barrows for execution sites and cemeteries enforces the impression presented by the rood/gallows interchange in the boundary clauses; with the barrow representing the hill of Golgotha, where Christ was hanged with the two thieves. Charter bounds describe three instances of *cwealmstow* (execution site), which is the term used in the OE Bible to describe Golgotha. Germanic lore too may have influenced the reuse of barrows as execution sites. The 8th-century *Life of St Guthlac*, for example, records how the saint, while leading an existence of repentance for former misdeeds, builds his hermitage in an old burial mound (*hlaew*) and is tormented by the devils who live there (Colgrave 1956, 92-4, 100-10). Throughout the probably 8th-century epic poem *Beowulf*, there are references to the *beorg* (barrow) in which the dragon guards his treasure and in *Maxims II* 'The dragon belongs in its barrow...' (Dobbie 1942, 55-57). This would suggest that felons, after being denied burial in consecrated ground, were taken one step further to endure eternal torment by interment with demons in barrows.

The frequent instances of triple burials raises an interesting possibility with regard to a biblical motivation for the circumstances of certain executions. For, although Christ and the two criminals were not buried together, as archaeological deposits such as graves imply the contemporary death of the individuals. Such evidence could be used to suggest that, on occasion, criminals were executed in threes in biblical fashion. The vivid imagery displayed by such an event would surely have marked the extreme of any attempts by the secular or religious authorities to present the outcome of wrongdoing to the people. The poem *Christ III*, which, if not composed by Cynewulf is undoubtedly closely related to him (Bradley 1982, 229), describes how '...those seduced by sins, dark evil-doers, will fearfully stare in distress ...[at the crucifixion scene]...; they will see as their ruin that which would have best befitted them,' (*ibid.*, 235).

From the 10th century the term *headenen byrgels* (heathen burials) appears with striking frequency in the charter bounds and it has been suggested that the term is best applied to the burial places of execution victims (Aldsworth 1979, 176), although most commentators have interpreted the term as referring to burial grounds of the pagan Anglo-Saxon period (Gelling 1978, 157; Myres 1986, 38, fn. 2). Patrick Wormald has noted that there are no examples dated to before 900 (Wormald forthcoming), and there are a few instances in the bounds of heathen burial places located adjacent to execution sites. For example, the *cwealmstow* in the Little Hinton, Wiltshire, bounds (S1588) of the mid 11th-century is located less than fifty metres from a heathen burial place (Thompson

1959, 211, Fig. 2). In the majority of cases, however, it is likely that the heathen burial places served as places of execution and burial for criminals, suicides and the unbaptised. The terminology is well suited to the climate of the 10th century religious reforms and the nature of the excavated sites with late dates would seem to reflect tighter royal prerogative and the increasing influence of the Church in affairs of state. Kenneth Sisam (1953, 287) has suggested that Archbishop Wulfstan, who drafted much of the legislation of Aethelred and Cnut (Wormald 1978), used his junior clergy to disseminate royal legislation and Wormald (*ibid.*, 57-58) has drawn attention to the close connection drawn by Wulfstan between law and homily. In short, from the 10th-century reforms onward, the church became increasingly more powerful in its influence over secular affairs and this is realised no more clearly than in the development of the judicial system.

What seems most likely is that the mode of trying and executing criminals was closely tied with religion and cult in pagan Anglo-Saxon England and that the Church saw fit to preserve certain institutions within a cloak of Christianity in the same way that a great many pagan festivals, practices and concepts were adopted rather than substantially changed. By the middle of the 10th century, the terminology of execution sites is more workmanlike. For example, the *wearg* and *peofa* names are joined by the *cwealmstowa* and the *heathen burial places* from that century onward. This process probably owes its origins to the 10th-century religious reforms and reflects a desire to mark out clearly the non-Christians within society.

Conclusions

The review of the writer's work presented here is necessarily brief and comprises a synopsis of a PhD thesis shortly to be submitted to the University of London (Institute of Archaeology). This is the first study of its kind to approach judicial studies and is necessarily broad in scope. It is hoped, however, that sufficient evidence has been quoted to indicate not only the complexity of the sources but also how they might be approached through interdisciplinary studies of archaeological and historical materials.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Paul McCulloch of Winchester Museums Service for his generous provision of information about the Old Dairy Cottage burials and James Graham-Campbell and Martin Welch for their comments on previous versions of this paper.

Bibliography

- ALDSWORTH F.R. 1979: Droxford Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Soberton, Hampshire, *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* 35, 93-182.
- ATTENBOROUGH F.L. 1922: *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, Cambridge University Press.
- BARTLETT J.E. & AKEY R.W. 1972: Excavations on Walkington Wold, 1967-1969, *East Riding Archaeologist* 1:2, 1-93.
- BASSETT S. 1989: In search of the origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms, in: S. BASSETT (ed.), *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, Leicester University Press, 3-27.
- BIDDLE M. 1976: *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, Winchester Studies 1, Oxford.
- BLACKBURN M.A.S. & PAGAN H.E. 1986: A Revised Check-list of Coin Hoards from the British Isles c.500-1100, in: M.A.S. BLACKBURN (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Monetary History: Essays in Memory of Michael Dolley*, Leicester University Press, 291-314.
- BLACKMORE H.P. 1894: On a Barrow Near Old Sarum, *Salisbury Field Club Transactions* I, 49-51.
- BODDINGTON A. 1990: Models of Burial, Settlement and Worship: The Final Phase Reviewed, in: E. SOUTHWORTH (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries: A Reappraisal*, Stroud, 177-199.
- BRADLEY S.A.J. 1982: *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, London, Melbourne and Toronto.
- CARVER M.O.H. 1992: The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Sutton Hoo: An Interim Report, in: M.O.H. CARVER (ed.), *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, Woodbridge, 343-371.
- COLGRAVE B. (ed.) 1956: *Felix's Life of St Guthlac*, Cambridge University Press.
- DOBBIE E. VAN K. 1942: *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records 6, London and New York.
- DOLLEY R.H.M. 1957: The Stockbridge Down find of Anglo-Saxon Coins, *British Numismatic Journal* 28, 283-287.
- DUNNING G.C. & WHEELER R.E.M. 1931: A Barrow at Dunstable, Bedfordshire, *Archaeological Journal* 88, 193-217.
- EKWALL E. 1960: *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, Oxford University Press (4th edn).
- ELLIS DAVIDSON H.R. 1964: *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*, Harmondsworth.
- GATRELL V.A.C. 1994: *The Hanging Tree*, Oxford University Press.
- GEAKE H. 1992: Burial Practice in Seventh- and Eighth-Century England, in: M.O.H. CARVER (ed.), *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, Woodbridge, 83-94.
- GELLING M. 1978: *Signposts to the Past*, Chichester.
- GRIFFITH A.F. & SALZMANN L.F. 1914: An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Alfriston, Sussex, *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 56, 16-53.
- GRINSELL L.V. 1991: Barrows in the Anglo-Saxon Land Charters, *Antiquaries Journal* 71, 46-63.
- GRUNDY G.B. 1936-37: Saxon Charters of Dorset, *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* 58, 103-136.
- HARMAN M., MOLLESON T.I. & PRICE J.L. 1981: Burials, bodies and beheadings in Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, *Bulletin British Museum Natural History (Geology)* 35/3, 145-188.
- HAWKES S.C. 1990: The Anglo-Saxon Necklace from Lower Brook Street, in: M. BIDDLE (ed.), *Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester*, Winchester Studies 7.II, Oxford, 621-627.
- HAWKES S.C. & WELLS C. 1975: Crime and Punishment in an Anglo-Saxon Cemetery?, *Antiquity* 49, 118-122.
- HILL D. 1981: *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford.
- HILL N.G. 1937: Excavations on Stockbridge Down, 1935-36, *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* 13, 247-259.
- HIRST S.M. 1985: *An Anglo-Saxon Inhumation Cemetery at Sewerby, East Yorkshire*, York University Archaeological Publications 4.
- HIRST S.M. 1993: Death and the archaeologist, in: M.O.H. CARVER (ed.), *In Search of Cult: Essays in Honour of Philip Rahtz*, Woodbridge, 41-43.
- HOWELL T.B. & HOWELL T.J. 1809-1826: *Complete collection of state trials*, 33 vols.
- HUNTER BLAIR P. 1963: *Roman Britain and Early England 55 B.C. - A.D. 871*, Edinburgh.
- KNUSEL C.J., JANAWAY R.C. & KING S.E. 1996: Death, Decay, and Ritual Reconstruction: Archaeological Evidence of Cadaveric Spasm, *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 15:2, 121-128.
- LIDDELL D.M. 1933: Excavations at Meon Hill, *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* 12, 126-162.
- LOWTHER A.W.G. 1931: The Saxon Cemetery at Guildown, Guildford, Surrey, *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 39, 1-50.
- LOYN H.R. 1984: *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England 500-1087*, London.
- MATTHEWS C.L. 1962-64: The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Marina Drive, Dunstable, *Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal* 1, 25-47.
- MEANEY A.L. 1964: *Gazeteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites*, London.
- MEANEY A.L. & HAWKES S.C. 1970: *Two Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries at Winnall, Winchester, Hampshire*, Woodbridge, 83-94.

- shire, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph Series No. 4.
- MORRIS R. (ed.) 1880: *The Blickling Homilies of the 10th Century from the Marquis of Lothian's unique MS. A.D. 971*, London, Early English Text Society.
- MYRES J.N.L. 1986: *The English Settlements*, Oxford.
- NENK B.S., MARGESON S. & HURLEY M. 1991: Medieval Britain and Ireland in 1990, *Medieval Archaeology* 35, 126-238.
- PITT RIVERS A.H. 1898: *Excavations in Cranborne Chase near Rushmore, on the Borders of Dorset and Wilts. 1893-1896*, Volume IV, Privately printed.
- POLLOCK F. & MAITLAND F.W. 1898: *The History of English Law Before the Time of Edward I*, 2 vols., Cambridge University Press.
- RAHTZ P.A. 1993: *The English Heritage Book of Glastonbury*, London.
- RAHTZ P.A. & HIRST S.M. 1974: *Beckery Chapel, Glastonbury, 1967-8*, Glastonbury Antiquarian Society.
- REYNOLDS A.J. forthcoming: Late Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burials from Mallin Hill in Context, in: M.J. ALLEN & J. MCKINLEY, *An Anglo-Saxon Execution Site at Mallin Hill, near Lewes, Sussex Archaeological Collections*.
- RYPINS S. 1924: *Three Old English Prose Texts*, London, Early English Text Society.
- SALIN E. 1952: *La Civilisation Merovingienne, 2, Les Sepultures*, Paris.
- SAWYER P.H. 1968: *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks No. 8, London.
- SHAW S. 1798-1801: *The History and Antiquities of Staffordshire*, 2 vols.
- SISAM K. 1953: The relationship of Aethelred's codes V and VI, in: *Studies in the History of Old English Literature*, Oxford, 278-287.
- STONE J.F.S. 1932: Saxon interments on Roche Court Down, Winterslow, *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 45, 568-582.
- THOMPSON T.R. 1959: The Early Bounds of Wanborough and Little Hinton: An Exercise in Topography, *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 57, 203-211.
- WENHAM S.J. 1989: Anatomical Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Weapon Injuries, in: S.C. HAWKES (ed.), *Weapons and Warfare in Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 123-139.
- WEST S.E. 1988: *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Westgarth Gardens, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk*, East Anglian Archaeology 38, Bury St Edmunds.
- WILSON D. 1992: *Anglo-Saxon Paganism*, London and New York.
- WORMALD C.P. 1978: Aethelred the Lawmaker, in: D. Hill (ed.), *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, British Archaeological Reports 59, Oxford, 47-80.
- WORMALD C.P. 1991: In Search of King Offa's Lost Law Code, in: I. WOOD & N. LUND (eds), *People and Places in Northern Europe 500-1600*, Woodbridge, 25-45.
- WHYMER J.J. 1996: *Barrow Excavations in Norfolk, 1984-88*, East Anglian Archaeology 77, Dereham.

Andrew Reynolds
University College London
Institute of Archaeology
31-34 Gordon Square
London
WC1H 0PY
UK

Inscripttafeln aus mittelalterlichen Gräbern. Einige Thesen zu ihrer Aussagekraft

Zuweilen schon im 11., verstärkt ab dem 12. Jahrhundert gelangten in West- und Mitteleuropa Beigaben in mittelalterliche Gräber. Es handelte sich etwa um Finger- und Ohrringe, Schnallen, Münzen oder Gefäße. Diese Beigabensitte blieb jedoch meist auf Einzelstücke und wenige Gräber eines Friedhofs beschränkt; von einer regelhaften Trachtausstattung, wie sie etwa im Frühmittelalter üblich war, kann keine Rede sein. Daneben tritt eine kleine Gruppe prominenter Bestattungen: Angetan mit reichem Ornat und mit den Insignien ihres Amtes, zuweilen auch mit Waffen ausgestattet umfaßt sie vor allem Könige und Bischöfe. Insbesondere wo diese Beigaben Insigniencharakter besitzen, handelt es sich ganz überwiegend um spezielle Grabanfertigungen oder Altstücke¹.

Während die frühmittelalterliche Beigabensitte seit langem Gegenstand wissenschaftlicher Diskussion ist, hat die Beigabensitte des hohen und späten Mittelalters bislang kaum Beachtung gefunden. Dies ist umso erstaunlicher, als der Tod im Mittelalter seit nunmehr fast zwei Jahrzehnten die historische Forschung beschäftigt. Am erstaunlichsten aber ist, daß sogar die Historiker bislang die Schriftquellen aus den Gräbern selbst weitgehend ignorierten².

Dabei sind heute an die zweihundert beschriebene Tafeln aus mittelalterlichen Gräbern bekannt. Sie streuen vom Atlantik bis zur Elbe, von Trondheim bis Palermo, setzen bereits im 6. Jahrhundert ein und bleiben mancherorten bis in die Barockzeit in Gebrauch. In den meisten Fällen handelt es sich auch bei ihnen um spezielle Grabanfertigungen, doch unterscheiden sie sich je nach Zeit und Gebiet in Aussehen, Text und damit ihrer Bestimmung ganz erheblich. Diese Unterschiede sollen Thema der folgenden

Ausführungen sein, zumal eine zusammenfassende Bewertung dieses Beigabentyps bislang fehlt. Lediglich Hartmut Ehrentraut bearbeitete 1951 den Teilbereich der bleiernen Grabauthentiken; bedingt durch den Publikationsstand und die Arbeitsbedingungen mußten ihm jedoch wesentliche Beziehungen zu anderen Typen von Inscripten aus Gräbern verborgen bleiben³. Kleinere Studien untersuchten auf regionaler Basis Inscripten mit Absolutionsformular oder Gebeten⁴.

Auf der Suche nach Vorläufern der hochmittelalterlichen Grabauthentiken wollte Ehrentraut weder die *tablai* ägyptischer und koptischer Mumien, auf denen neben dem Namen gelegentlich auch weitere persönliche Daten sowie Wunschformeln erscheinen, noch die in antiker Tradition stehenden Grabsteine fränkischer Gräber gelten lassen⁵. Abweichungen in Material und Formular sollten hierfür jedoch weniger angeführt werden als chronologische Probleme, da die ägyptischen *tablai* wohl in spätantiker Zeit, die fränkischen Grabsteine im 7. Jahrhundert auslaufen, also gut drei Jahrhunderte bis zu den hochmittelalterlichen Authentiken zu überbrücken bleiben.

Entscheidend war für Ehrentraut daher eine andere Gruppe von verdeckt angebrachten Inscripten, die sich spärlich aber kontinuierlich seit der Spätantike nachweisen lassen: Reliquienauthentiken. Die schütterten Belege des ersten Jahrtausends zeigen, daß sie auf Gallien und den Mittelmeerraum beschränkt bleiben, also dem in antiker Tradition stehenden römischen Kulturkreis angehören. Als Trägermaterial verwandte man Stein, Pergamentstreifen – die bis in den Barock üblich blieben – oder Metall⁶. Neben

¹ Zu den archäologischen Aspekten der Königsbestattungen bereitet der Verf. derzeit eine Dissertation vor. Im Rahmen dieser Arbeit wird auch die hier skizzierte Entwicklung ausführlich behandelt werden.

² Wenngleich in einigen Punkten etwas undifferenziert, bleibt die mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie Ariès' die grundlegende Arbeit zu diesem Thema (hier zitiert nach der deutschen Ausgabe 1982). Für Großbritannien ist jetzt das zusammenfassende

Werk von Binski 1996 anzuführen. Im deutschen Raum hat vor allem die Nekrolog-Forschung starke Impulse freigesetzt (z.B. Schmid & Wollasch 1984; Althoff 1984).

³ Ehrentraut 1951. Diese Dissertation ist nur in Auszügen publiziert (Ehrentraut 1952).

⁴ Cochet 1857, 303-318; Knudsen 1995.

⁵ Ehrentraut 1951, 12 f.; Ehrentraut 1952, 217.

⁶ Ehrentraut 1952, 217 f. Vgl. z.B. einen solchen pergamen-

einigen Silberlamina tritt unter den Metallen besonders Blei in den Vordergrund, aus dem auch das gesamte Reliquiar angefertigt sein konnte, so daß die Inschrift in den Deckel oder eine Seitenwand geschrieben wurde.

Seit der Jahrtausendwende läßt sich ein sprunghafter Anstieg dieser in/an den Reliquienbehältnissen deponierten Inschriften feststellen, für die zunächst das gesamte Materialspektrum der vorangegangenen Jahrhunderte in Gebrauch blieb, bis sich um 1100 Blei als nahezu einziges Trägermaterial durchsetzte. Rhein und Donau begrenzen jedoch weiterhin das Verbreitungsgebiet. Östlich und nördlich fehlen bis auf wenige Ausnahmen solche verdeckten Reliquienauthentiken. Hier finden sich jene auch in Gallien und dem Mittelmeerraum üblichen Schreine mit Inschriften auf der Außenseite, doch entanden auch interessante Mischformen wie etwa am Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts das Armreliquiar des heiligen Blasius in Braunschweig: Die authentisierende Inschrift ist auf dem goldenen Bodenblech angebracht, war also bei normaler Aufstellung ebenfalls nicht zu sehen⁷.

Die plötzliche Zunahme der Reliquienauthentiken um die Jahrtausendwende ist unschwer mit veränderten theologischen Anforderungen zu erklären: 993 hatte Papst Johannes XV. Bischof Ulrich von Augsburg zum Heiligen erhoben. Damit war erstmals ein Präzedenzfall geschaffen, die Kanonisation aus den Händen der Bischöfe an den Heiligen Stuhl zu ziehen. Propagandawirksam verkündete der Papst die Erhebung in einem feierlichen Sendschreiben an alle Erzbischöfe, Bischöfe und Äbte Galliens und Germaniens⁸. Damit entstanden neue Anforderungen, denn die Lokaltradition, die zuvor oft genügt hatte, ein Grab als das des präsumptiven Heiligen zu identifizieren, mußte nun durch "objektivere", auch von Rom aus nachvollziehbare Kriterien ergänzt werden. Und was wäre objektiver als eine bei den Gebeinen gefundene Authentik? Die zuvor nur gelegentlich geübte Praxis, Reliquien mit Beischriften zu sichern, erwies sich nun als probate Lösung latenter Identifikationsprobleme. Es dürfte daher kaum Zufall sein, daß die beiden ältesten bekannten auf die Kanonisation Ulrichs folgenden Reliquienauthentiken aus Italien stammen: Eine Bleitafel der seiligen Ermenia von 996/99 aus Süditalien und eine Silbertafel des

heiligen Alexius von 999 aus Rom⁹. Doch auch die Kehrseite solch eines Beweisverfahrens ließ nicht lange auf sich warten, denn schon 1001 versuchte man in Dijon, über eine gefälschte Inschrifttafel den Besitz der Gebeine der heiligen Radegunde zu simulieren¹⁰.

Bislang unbemerkt steht eine früheste Gruppe profaner Grabinschriften neben den Reliquienauthentiken des ersten Jahrtausends: Es handelt sich um Ziegel, in die der Name des Toten eingeritzt wurde; weitere Angaben wie etwa Beruf und Todestag oder gar längere Texte sind selten; gelegentlich schließt ein "*in pace*" die Inschrift ab. Der Schwerpunkt dieser Grabsitte liegt gleichfalls in Gallien, einzelne Belege reichen bis zum Rhein oder ins Wallis, doch sei auch an das Gisulf-Grab aus Cividale del Friuli erinnert¹¹; wiederum befinden wir uns also im romanischen Kulturkreis. Zeitlich erstreckt sich diese Gruppe von Grabinschriften vom 6. bis zum 10. Jahrhundert, doch bleibt eine gewisse Unschärfe, da tragfähige stratigraphische Zusammenhänge nur selten die epigraphische Einordnung ergänzen.

Diese Inschriften lösen gemeinsam mit den *libri memoriales* die obertägig sichtbaren Grabdenkmäler des frühen Mittelalters ab, die im 7. Jahrhundert einer weiträumigen Anonymisierung des Grabes zum Opfer fallen¹². Während die Memorialbücher dem Totenrezitativ des gallikanischen Ritus bzw. als Nekrologe ab dem 9. Jahrhundert dem stillen Totengedenken oder der Verkündigung des römischen Ritus entsprechen – jeweils Vorgriffe auf den erhofften Eintrag in das apokalyptische *liber vitae*¹³ –, ist der Zweck der Grabinschriften weniger deutlich zu erkennen: Wenn diese gelegentlich mit einer "*in pace*"-Wendung enden, könnte man auf den Gedanken verfallen, diesen Inschriften käme eschatologische Bedeutung zu. Doch gerade daß diese Wendung nur gelegentlich auftritt und die meisten Tafeln außer dem Namen des Verstorbenen keinerlei weiteren Text tragen, zeigt, daß solche Jenseitswünsche nicht der Zweck, sondern nur nettes aber nicht notwendiges Beiwerk der Inschriften waren. Vielmehr dürfte der gelegentliche "*in pace*"-Zusatz als Rudiment der obertägig aufgestellten frühmittelalterlichen Grabstelen zu interpretieren sein, die also offenbar die Vorgänger der tönernen Namenstafeln waren. Daher

tenen Reliquienstreifen des 7./8. Jahrhunderts aus Valeria/Sitten (Jörg 1977, Nr. 27).

⁷ Boockmann 1993, Nr. 5.

⁸ Herrmann-Mascard 1975, 93 f.

⁹ Ehrentraut 1952, 219; Nerinius 1752, 206 f.

¹⁰ Ehrentraut 1951, 112.

¹¹ Blant 1856, 190 f.; Scholz 1994, Nr. 6; Jörg 1977, Nr. 21, 23, 32, 36; Menghin 1985, 156.

¹² Ariès 1982, 261 f.

¹³ Ariès 1982, 132 f., 191 f., 200-202; Angenendt 1984, 181-183, 188-193; Goff 1991, 153.

liegt die Vermutung nahe, die Namensinschriften sollten, wie einst die Grabstelen, die Identifizierung der Bestattung mit einem bestimmten Toten sicherstellen. Hier ist nun anzumerken, daß die zeitgleichen Reliquienauthentiken meist dem *"Hic sunt"*-Formular ohne weitere Zusätze folgen, also offensichtlich als Identifikationshilfen bei allfälligen späteren Schreinöffnungen dienten und ebenfalls des Jenseitsbezugs entbehrten. Andererseits fehlt den Namensinschriften profaner Gräber eben dieses *"Hic sunt"*, oft auch jedes andere Formular, wie sie auch in der Qualität des Materials hinter den Reliquienauthentiken zurückbleiben. Der ideelle Hintergrund dieses textlichen wie qualitativen Abstands zu den Reliquienauthentiken könnte im Ideal der christlichen Demut zu suchen sein, das vielleicht auch bei der allgemeinen Anonymisierung des Grabes eine Rolle spielte. In ihrem Bestreben, diese Anonymisierung insgeheim zu unterlaufen, rücken die Namensinschriften in die Nähe jener karolingischen Prunkepitaphien, von denen das Papst Hadrians I. das bekannteste ist¹⁴. Insbesondere Fragmente einiger solcher in Ziegel geritzter Prunkepitaphien aus Gräbern nahe der Kapelle St-Eloi bei Serquigny, Dép. Eure, streichen die ideale Verwandtschaft beider Gruppen karolingerzeitlicher Grabinschriften heraus¹⁵. Auf den meisten Ziegeltafeln jedoch entsteht als Kompromiß aus demütiger(?) Anonymisierung und wortreichem Prunkepitaph eine Namensinschrift, die in ihrer lakonischen Kürze zwar vollkommen den karolingerzeitlichen Nekrologen entspricht, zur späteren Identifikation einer Bestattung wegen eben dieser Kürze aber nur sehr bedingt geeignet ist. Über die Position der meisten Gräber mit solchen Namensziegeln wissen wir nichts, doch ein Inschriftziegel aus Nivelles stammt immerhin aus einer Kircheninnenbestattung. Bewegen wir uns also durchweg in gehobenem sozialem Milieu? Sollte die in Nivelles genannte Himiltrud gar mit einer Frau Karls des Großen zu verbinden sein¹⁶, träfen wir auf das gleiche soziale Umfeld, dem man die karolingerzeitlichen Prunkepitaphien zugestand¹⁷.

Um die Jahrtausendwende setzt eine neue Gruppe von Grabauthentiken ein: Es sind die von Ehrentraut behandelten bleiernen Inschrifttafeln aus profanen Gräbern. Die älteste bekannte dieser Tafeln gab man 994 Bischof Wolfgang von Regensburg mit ins Grab¹⁸. Wenngleich es bei dem äußerst lückenhaften Bestand unserer Überlieferung immer mißlich ist,

zwischen einzelnen Funden und Ereignissen Kausalzusammenhänge herzustellen, scheint es doch kein Zufall, daß Wolfgang ein Schüler jenes 993 heiliggesprochenen Ulrichs von Augsburg war, den er 973 auch beerdigt hatte. Zwar wissen wir nicht, inwieweit Wolfgang an der Heiligsprechung Ulrichs mitwirkte, bzw. wer Wolfgang beerdigte, doch waren die Ereignisse um die Kanonisation Ulrichs mindestens aufgrund des päpstlichen Sendschreibens in Regensburg bekannt. Die Wolfgang-Tafel scheint damit eine ebenso unmittelbare Reaktion auf die päpstliche Okkupation des Heiligsprechungsverfahrens darzustellen wie die italienischen Reliquienauthentiken Ermenias und Alexius'. 1052 wurde auch Wolfgang durch Papst Leo IX. heiliggesprochen.

In gleicher Weise wie bei Wolfgang stammen zwei der ältesten bleiernen Grabauthentiken des Rheinlandes aus Gräbern von Klerikern, die schon bald darauf kanonisiert wurden: Erzbischof Heribert v. Köln (+1021) war seit 994 Kanzler für Italien, wo er mit der neuen Kanonisationspraxis bereits in Kontakt gekommen sein mag; heiliggesprochen wurde er wohl 1046/48¹⁹. Der Rekluse Simeon von Trier (+1035) stand bereits zu Lebzeiten im Rufe der Heiligkeit und wurde schon ein halbes Jahr nach seinem Tod kanonisiert²⁰. Nicht nur durch diesen Gang der Ereignisse, sondern auch über Mischformen im Formular konnte Ehrentraut nachweisen, daß die Idee, Tote mit bleiernen Authentiken auszustatten, von den Reliquienauthentiken abgeleitet worden sein dürfte²¹.

Es fällt auf, daß sich die drei angeführten Fälle nicht im Kernbereich der Reliquienauthentiken sondern mit Regensburg, Trier und Köln-Deutz in der Überschneidungszone von stark romanisch geprägtem Süden und Westen und in germanischer Tradition stehenden Gebieten im Osten ereigneten. In Quedlinburg, also weit östlich des Rheins hatte man gar schon 968 den tonnenförmigen, mit einem Stangenkreuz verzierten Sarkophagdeckel der Königin Mathilde auf der Außenseite mit einer identifizierenden Inschrift versehen, die jedoch stets unter dem Fußbodenniveau, also unsichtbar blieb. Einerseits weicht die Quedlinburger Inschrift durch den Zusatz *"cuius anima eternam optineat requiem"* vom Formular der Reliquienauthentiken ab – bei den Heiligen konnte man davon ausgehen, daß dieser Wunsch bereits in Erfüllung gegangen war – andererseits wurde auch Mathilde schon bald als Heilige verehrt. Darauf weist vor allem eine erste um 975 entstandene

¹⁴ Schramm & Mutherich 1981, Nr. 12.

¹⁵ Blant 1856, Nr. 110, 123-125.

¹⁶ Kubach & Verbeek 1976, 862.

¹⁷ Vgl. Ariès 1982, 277.

¹⁸ Ehrentraut 1952, 220.

¹⁹ Ehrentraut 1952, Nr. 1.

²⁰ Ehrentraut 1952, Nr. 2.

²¹ Ehrentraut 1952, 218-221.

vita, vielleicht auch eine *confessio* am Fußende ihres Sarkophages hin²².

Wenngleich bei den angeführten Beispielen für die Bestattenden wohl nicht daran zu zweifeln war, daß die Toten schon bald unter die Heiligen gerechnet werden würden, blieb zunächst die theologische Ungeheuerlichkeit bestehen, daß man den Leichnam gewöhnlicher Sterblicher in der Art von Reliquien behandelte. Damit war eine Entwicklung in Gang gesetzt, die binnen kurzem den Zusammenhang von bleierner Authentik und Reliquie auflöste: Schon 999 ritzte man eine ausführliche Inschrift in den Deckel des Bleisargs der Äbtissin Mathilde von Quedlinburg, Enkelin König Heinrichs I.; 999/1013 erhielt Ermintrud, die jung verstorbene Enkelin Hugo Capets, in Nivelles ein beschriftetes Bleikreuz ins Grab; eine runde Bleitafel deponierte man 1036 im Grab Erzbischof Pilgrims von Köln; 1039 und 1043 erhielten Kaiser Konrad II. und Kaiserin Gisela rechteckige Tafeln²³. Mag man bei Mathilde von Quedlinburg und Pilgrim von Köln noch mit baldiger Kanonisation gerechnet oder für Ermintrud, Konrad II. und Gisela königliche Geblütsheiligkeit ins Feld geführt haben, so war mit diesen Bestattungen doch eine Grenze überschritten, die bleierne Grabauthentiken zu einer weithin verfügbaren Grabbeigabe der Oberschicht machte²⁴. Dementsprechend werden sie um die Mitte des 11. Jahrhunderts insbesondere in Kleriker- aber auch in Laienbestattungen des Rhein-Maas-Gebietes häufiger; in der zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte erreichten sie nicht nur Sachsen, sondern im Gefolge der normannischen Expansion auch (Süd-)England. Vom späten 12. bis in die Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts fanden solche Authentiken auch in Dänemark Verwendung. Im 13. Jahrhundert übernahm schließlich die Ile-de-France die Grabauthentik wo sie vor allem in Königsgräber gelangte; einzelne Belege stammen aus Aquitanien²⁵. Mit Magdeburg, Prag und Wien erreichte sie erst im 14. Jahrhundert ihre maximale Ausdehnung nach Osten, blieb dort allerdings bis in den Barock in Gebrauch²⁶.

Mit der Ableitung der Grabauthentiken von den Reliquienauthentiken erklärt sich auch die Verwendung von Blei für die Inschriften in profanen Gräbern: Für die Reliquien war ein leicht bearbeitbares, beständiges Material gewünscht, das auch nach Jahrhunderten die Identifikation noch ermöglichte; als

solches wurde Blei für die Grabauthentiken übernommen²⁷. Das gelegentlich mit Blei assoziierte Motiv der Demut kann für die Reliquienauthentiken keine Rolle gespielt haben und sollte daher auch nicht auf die abgeleiteten Grabauthentiken angewandt werden. Im Gegensatz zu den Reliquienauthentiken waren diese Grabtafeln jedoch dem Verwesungsprozeß eines Leichnams ausgesetzt, der sie bis zur völligen Auflösung angreifen konnte. Als man dieses Problem erkannte, war der Beigabentyp jedoch offensichtlich schon derart verfestigte, daß man sich, statt das Material zu wechseln, gelegentlich mit dem Verdoppeln der Inschriften oder entsprechender Deponierung der Tafeln behalf.

Mit dem Material übertrug sich auch die Funktion der bleiernen Reliquienauthentiken auf die Grabauthentiken profaner Gräber. Kürzlich versuchte zwar Johannes Laudage, für die Grabtafel Kaiser Lothars III. (+1137) in Königsutter einen religiösen Gehalt zu konstruieren: Wegen der großen Bedeutung des Jahrtagedächtnisses käme der Angabe des Todestages auf der Tafel eschatologische Bedeutung zu²⁸. Wenngleich die Bedeutung der Jahrzeit garnicht abzustreiten ist, steht dieser Argumentation doch entgegen, daß fast ein Drittel aller Authentiken gar keine Angabe des Todestages enthalten; die Sicherung der Jahrzeit kann also nicht das vorherrschende Anliegen der Grabtafeln gewesen zu sein. Sie mußte vielmehr über Nekrologe und Stiftungen gewährleistet werden. Fehlt den Grabtafeln aber ein eschatologisches Motiv, können sie nur, gleich den Reliquienauthentiken, als Identifikationshilfe bei späteren Graböffnungen gedacht gewesen sein²⁹.

Angesichts der (theoretischen) Unverletzlichkeit des christlichen Grabes mag dieses Motiv überraschen, durften doch nur die Gräber von Heiligen bei der Erhebung geöffnet werden. Wiederrum sei jedoch, mit aller gebührenden Vorsicht, an ein historisch überliefertes Ereignis erinnert: Im Mai des Jahre 1000 ließ Kaiser Otto III. aus purer Neugier das Grab Karls des Großen in Aachen öffnen³⁰. Was von den Zeitgenossen mit großer Empörung zur Kenntnis genommen wurde, mußte der Oberschicht gleichwohl zeigen, daß solch eine rein informelle Öffnung auch ihres Grabes immerhin einmal im Bereich des Möglichen lag. Bezeichnenderweise reagierte man nicht, indem man versuchte, die Gräber besser zu schützen (z.B. durch Vermauern, tiefer Eingraben,

²² Kat. Hildesheim 1993, 2, 371 f.

²³ Stengel 1939; *Le folklore Brabançon* 243/44, 1984, 689 f.; Ehrentraut 1952, Nr. 4 f.

²⁴ Ehrentraut 1952, 220.

²⁵ Erlange-Brandenburg 1975, 42, 45-47; Favreau & Michaud 1979, 89 f.

²⁶ Vgl. das barocke Ensemble solcher Tafeln aus dem Georgskloster auf dem Prager Hradschin (Borkovský 1975).

²⁷ Ehrentraut 1952, 220.

²⁸ Laudage 1995, 96 f.

²⁹ So auch Ehrentraut 1952, 224.

³⁰ Thietmar, Chron. IV.47 (MGH SSrerGerm 1889, 184/86).

unkennlich machen), sondern indem man die Bedrohung als Chance begriff: Die nun einsetzenden Grabauthentiken erweiterten nämlich die einfachen Formulare des 1. Jahrtausends zunächst geringfügig, dann stärker und wuchsen sich schon bald zu eloquenten und umfangreichen Selbstdarstellungen aus³¹. So beschrieb denn auch Otto von Freising die genannte Grauthentik Lothars III. mit den Worten: "actusque eius, ut nulla possent aboleri oblivione, in plumbeis lamina descripti iuxta eum reconduntur."³² Man zielte auf Leser späterer Zeiten, nicht auf das Jenseits!

Auf Kaiser Lothars Grabauthentik werden besonders seine Tugenden und sein Zug gegen die Sarazenen (gemeint sind die Normannen!) in Apulien hervorgehoben. Solche weltlichen Taten finden sich jedoch eher selten, bei weitem überwiegen Hinweise auf Bautätigkeit oder die Ausschmückung von Kirchen. Stellvertretend sei der schon genannte Erzbischof Heribert von Köln (+1021) genannt, dessen Grabauthentik darauf verweist, daß Heribert die Deutzer Salvator-Kirche erbauen ließ und einweihte. Besonderen Reiz gewinnt dieses Beispiel, indem Heribert ja nicht nur bald darauf heiliggesprochen wurde, sondern auch bei der Graböffnung Karls des Großen anwesend gewesen war, sich bei ihm also die beiden vermuteten Herkunftsstränge der Grabauthentiken verzweigen.

Solch offenkundige Ruhmestaten wie Kriegszüge und Bautätigkeit blieben jedoch auf Männer beschränkt. Auf den Grabtafeln von Frauen entsprechen ihnen häufig Angaben, wessen Tochter, Frau oder Mutter die betreffende Tote war – ein interessanter Beleg, was das Mittelalter bei Frauen für bemerkenswerte Leistungen erachtete³³.

Gerade was die zunehmende Eloquenz der Grabtafeln, den Tatenbericht betrifft, sei noch eine dritte Wurzel der Grabauthentiken in Betracht gezogen: die Lobrede auf den Verstorbenen während des *planctus*. So rühmt etwa im Rolandslied, einem Text des 12. Jahrhunderts, Karl der Große an seinem toten Neffen zunächst den Glauben und die Liebe, Charaktereigenschaften also, dann rühmt er ihn als Heerführer – die Parallelität im Aufbau zur Grabtafel Lothars III. sticht ins Auge! Allgemeiner noch: Wie die Grabauthentiken auf die Nachwelt ausgerichtet sind, gilt auch der *planctus* und mit ihm die Lobrede den Hinterbliebenen³⁴.

Eine Sonderform der Grabauthentik wird in Dänemark faßbar: Bleierne Grabauthentiken, beschränkt auf Könige und Bischöfe, fanden hier nur in der ersten Hälfte des 13. Jahrhunderts Verwendung. In den folgenden zwei Jahrhunderten legte man verstorbenen Adligen gerne ihr Siegel ins Grab, das man zuvor meist zerbrochen oder zumindest durch einen Schlag unbenutzbar gemacht hatte, um Mißbrauch vorzubeugen³⁵. Eine gewisse chronologische Unschärfe bleibt, da viele dieser Siegel nur stilistisch einzuordnen sind, doch scheinen sie in der Masse dem (späten) 13. und 14. Jahrhundert anzugehören. Vorformen könnten drei spitzovale bleierne Grabauthentiken für Bischöfe von Ribe aus dem letzten Viertel des 12. Jahrhunderts darstellen, die Siegelabdrücke imitieren³⁶.

Anders in der Ile-de-France: Dort geht eine kleine Gruppe von drei – intakten – Siegeln aus königlichen Gräbern der zweiten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts der Übernahme der Grabauthentiken im 13. Jahrhundert voraus³⁷.

Auch solchen Siegeln fehlt ganz offensichtlich eine Jenseitsausrichtung. Schon ihre chronologische Stellung aber auch ihre soziale Einordnung deuten vielmehr an, daß sie funktional den bleiernen Grabauthentiken an die Seite gestellt werden müssen, d.h. auch sie sind als Identifikationshilfen bei späteren Graböffnungen anzusprechen.

Bewußt vernachlässigte ich bislang die Form der bleiernen Grabauthentiken, denn sie leitet zu einer zweiten großen Gruppe der Grabinschriften über: Östlich des Rheins und im Rheinland stehen die Grabauthentiken stets auf breit-rechteckige Tafeln geschrieben, weiter westlich findet man sie gelegentlich auch auf kreuzförmigen Tafeln, wofür die bereits erwähnte Authentik der Ermintrudis in Nivelles als Beispiel dienen mag.

Aber nicht nur die Form zeigt in Gallien Ungewohntes, sondern auch das Textformular ändert sich: Bereits auf einigen der rechteckigen Bleitafeln links des Rheins treten Gebete unterschiedlicher Länge neben den identifizierenden Textteil. Das kann von einem einfachen "*Requiescat in pace*" für die Gräfin Margarete von Flandern (+1194) in Brugge bis zu einem größeren Teil des Credo auf der Tafel im Grab Erzbischof Adalberts I. (+1137) in Mainz reichen³⁸. Ebenso finden sich einige kreuzförmige Tafeln mit

³¹ Insgesamt folgen die Grabauthentiken in etwa der von Ariès (1982, 278-280) für die Epitaphien skizzierten Entwicklung, die jedoch im Rheinland schon im 11. und nicht wie in Frankreich erst im 12. Jahrhundert einsetzt.

³² Otto Fris., Chron. (MGH SSrerGerm 1912, 340).

³³ Vgl. z.B. die Tafel aus dem Grab der Konstanze von Ara-

gon (+1222) in Palermo (Daniele 1784, 79).

³⁴ Ariès 1982, 185 f.

³⁵ Kieffer-Olsen 1993, 175 f.

³⁶ Möller & Nyborg 1979/83, 1/2, 114f.; 7/8, 527.

³⁷ Erlande-Brandenburg 1975, 42 f.

³⁸ Ehrentraut 1951, 90; Ehrentraut 1952, Nr. 17.

Gebetstext und identifizierendem Textteil, wofür die Tafel aus dem Grab Bischof Godefrids in Chichester (+1088) angeführt sei³⁹.

Grabauthentiken in Kreuzform und/oder mit Gebetsformular erklären sich als Übergangsformen zu einer vor allem in Nordgallien verbreiteten Gruppe von Grabtafeln, die stets kreuzförmig und mit einem Gebet versehen sind, aber keinen den Toten identifizierenden Text im Stil der (rechts)rheinischen Grabauthentiken aufweisen. Die bekannteste Gruppe solcher Kreuze stammt aus Bouteilles bei Dieppe⁴⁰. Wo sie ausschließlich einen Gebetstext tragen, sind sie schwierig zu datieren, doch zeigen die Mischformen mit den Grabauthentiken, daß sie schwerpunktmäßig dem späteren 11. und 12. Jahrhundert angehören dürften, eine Einordnung, der auch die Epigraphik nicht widerspricht.

Zugang zum Verständnis dieser Grabkreuze eröffnen jene Exemplare, die mit einem Absolutionsformular beschriftet sind. Bereits Abbé Cochet zeigte, daß das Formular der Kreuze aus Bouteilles dem in der Diözese Rouen verwandten Formular der Generalabsolution bei der Krankensalbung entspricht⁴¹. Kleinere Textvarianten etwa auf Kreuzen aus Périgueux oder Chichester dürften auf Textvarianten der Generalabsolution in diesen Diözesen beruhen. Mit dem Zugang über die Krankensalbung wird nun auch das Credo des Mainzer Erzbischofs Adalbert I. verständlich, denn das vom Moribunden gesprochene Credo war wie die Generalabsolution und das Pater noster Bestandteil des Sterberituals und Voraussetzung der Kommunion (*viaticum*!)⁴². Dem entspricht nicht nur, daß die Tafel Adalberts in der Ich-Form gehalten ist – sie beginnt mit einem *“Ego peccator Adelbertus”* und leitet durch *“obii credens in dominem patrem omnipotentem”* zum Glaubensbekenntnis über –, sondern auch, daß in den Absolutionstafeln der Tote unmittelbar mit einem *“ipse absolvat te, N.N.”* angesprochen wird: Es sind wörtlich jene Texte, die das individuelle Sterben begleitet hatten. Ganz anders als die Grabauthentiken zielen diese Gebetskreuze also nicht auf spätere Leser bei einer präsumptiven Graböffnung, sondern dienen dem Toten als Beweismittel seines christlichen Todes vor dem richtenden Angesicht Gottes. Dieser eschatologische Charakter überwiegt insbesondere auch die Möglichkeit einer späteren Minimalidentifikation, die durch das *“ipse absolvat te, N.N.”* in einem

Umfang wie etwa auf den karolingerzeitlichen Ziegeltafeln oder den zerbrochenen Siegeln Dänemarks gewährleistet gewesen wäre, sich hier aber nur als Nebenprodukt der Absolution ergab und daher nicht Zweck der Inschrift gewesen sein kann.

Dieser ganz auf das Jenseits orientierten Grabbeigabe entspricht zunächst, daß solche Gebetskreuze nur aus den Gräbern gewöhnlicher Männer und Frauen bekannt sind; Bouteilles etwa war ein ganz normaler Dorffriedhof. Hier gab es weder im Sinne der Zeit große Taten zu berichten, noch bestand die Aussicht auf eine gezielte spätere Graböffnung, die eine Grabauthentik sinnvoll oder erforderlich gemacht hätte. Zugleich sei daran erinnert, daß für das 11./12. Jahrhundert solche Grabauthentiken aus Oberschichtgräbern des normannischen Herrschaftsbereichs durchaus bekannt sind, wenngleich es dann gelegentlich wie im Fall des Bischofs Godefrid in Chichester zu Mischformen kommen konnte. Könnte die Schriftlichkeit der Grabauthentiken Anlaß gewesen sein, in Nordfrankreich auch Absolutionsformeln in Blei niederzuschreiben und dem Toten beizugeben? In Cluny etwa, weit ab jeglicher Grabauthentiken, war die Verbindung von Generalabsolution und Grab ebenfalls bekannt, doch hier bat Heloïse Abt Peter den Ehrwürdige um die Absolution für Peter Abaelard (+1142) in Form eines gesiegelten Briefes, *“ut sepulcro ejus suspendatur”*⁴³.

Nun sind aus Frankreich, vor allem aber aus England noch weitere Bleikreuze bekannt, eben nur ohne Absolutionsformular, Credo oder anderes Gebet. In Périgueux etwa tragen sie wiederholt ein *“A Ω”*, in Bury-St Edmunds ein *“crux christi triumphat, crux christi pellit hostem”*, Anspielungen also auf die Apokalypse, die auch sie in Zusammenhang mit der richtenden Wiederkehr Christi rücken könnten. Einige weitere Bleikreuze gänzlich ohne Text scheinen dagegen nur die Spitze eines Bergs zu sein, denn neben Beispielen aus dem Poitou, Bourges und Chartres stellt etwa auch noch ein um 1480 angefertigtes Stundenbuch aus Rouen den Toten in seinem Leichentuch mit einem Stoffkreuz auf der Brust dar⁴⁴. Es ist nun verlockend, wenig oder garnicht beschriebene Kreuze gleich den eloquenten Exemplaren als Beweismittel christlichen Sterbens vor dem Angesicht Gottes zu interpretieren. Eine andere Note bekommen sie jedoch durch eine mittelalterliche Meßanweisung, die eindringlich darauf aufmerksam

³⁹ Okasha 1996; Frau Dr. Okasha stellte mir diesen Aufsatz freundlicherweise als Manuskript zur Verfügung, wofür ihr herzlich gedankt sei.

⁴⁰ Cochet 1857, 304-310.

⁴¹ Cochet 1857, 308 f.

⁴² Haas 1989, 56 f.

⁴³ Cochet 1857, 317.

⁴⁴ Cochet 1857, 315 f.; Kat. Zürich/Köln 1994, Nr. 82.

macht, daß ein Christ bei der Bestattung mit dem Kreuz zu bezeichnen sei, *“vel ob id etiam quod summopere diabolus signum hoc pertimescat et ad eum locum horreat accedere qui cruce est designatus”*⁴⁵. Die Kreuze also nicht als Beweismittel vor dem Angesicht Gottes, sondern als Schutz des Toten auf dem Weg dorthin durch das Jenseits⁴⁶.

Hier ist nun auf eine Gruppe von etwa 15 Bleikreuzen aus dem südlichen Norwegen hinzuweisen, die epigraphisch in das 13./14. Jahrhundert zu datieren sind. Die meisten von ihnen tragen ein christliches Gebet, das in Runen in das Metall geschrieben ist. Dazwischen kommen auch einige Beschwörungen, etwa *“agla”*- oder *“abracadabra”*-Formulare vor. Wofern die Fundumstände dieser Kreuze bekannt sind, konnte Anne Merete Knudsen nachweisen, daß sie oft nachträglich in Gräbern erheblich höheren Alters – bis hin zu einem Grabhügel der älteren Eisenzeit – deponiert wurden: Sie scheinen dazu gedient zu haben, die heidnischen Mächte in diesen Hügeln zu bannen⁴⁷.

Vor dem Hintergrund dieses Befundes steht daher zu fragen, ob insbesondere die inschriftlosen oder mit einem *“A Ω”*- oder *“crux triumphat”*-Formular versehenen Kreuze Englands und Frankreichs tatsächlich stets dem Schutz der Toten vor den Dämonen dienten, oder ob sie nicht auch zuweilen die Lebenden vor einer Rückkehr der Toten schützen sollten. Immerhin stammt ein beachtliches Ensemble solcher inschriftloser Kreuze aus Massengräbern – vielleicht der Pest von 1348/50 – des Londoner Franziskanerklosters⁴⁸, von Toten also, die höchstwahrscheinlich den so gefürchteten *“gähen Tod”* des Mittelalters gestorben waren. Insbesondere ist in diesem Zusammenhang auch an ein schlecht datiertes Pektorkreuz mit *“Abracadabra”*-Inscription aus einem Grab in Lausanne oder an ein Bleitafelchen mit christlichem Bannfluch gegen die Mächte der Unterwelt aus einem Grab des 6. Jahrhunderts in Tragurium/Dalmatien zu erinnern, das wohl noch in Tradition der antiken Verwünschungstafelchen aus Blei steht⁴⁹.

Die vorangegangene Zusammenstellung hat gezeigt, daß Inschriften aus mittelalterlichen Gräbern in West- und Mitteleuropa durchaus nicht ungewöhnlich sind, jedoch zu verschiedenen Zeiten, in unterschiedlichem sozialen Kontext und zu ganz verschiedenen Zwecken deponiert wurden.

Die spätantik/frühmittelalterlichen Grabstelen, die die Bestattungen identifizierten, wichen etwa im 7. Jahrhundert der allgemeinen Anonymisierung der Gräber, fristeten jedoch in Gallien in Form einzelner Reliquienauthentiken in den Schreinen oder einiger Namensinschriften auf Tontafeln in den Gräbern vermutlich der karolingerzeitlichen Oberschicht ein Schattendasein, das nur gelegentlich durch ein aufwendiges obertägiges Epitaph durchbrochen wurde. Um die Jahrtausendwende, möglicherweise ausgelöst durch die erste päpstliche Kanonisation im Jahr 993, nahmen links des Rheins und südlich der Donau, also in Bereichen mit starker antiker Tradition, die Reliquienauthentiken sprunghaft zu, während Inschriften in profanen Gräbern zunächst verschwanden.

Schon seit dem Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts fanden sich jedoch in den Gräbern gewöhnlicher Sterblicher vor allem in Nordgallien Bleikreuze mit Gebetsformularen des Sterberitus, die dem Toten wohl als Beweismittel eines christlichen Todes beim Jüngsten Gericht dienen sollten. Diese Kreuze scheinen aber durch die Schriftlichkeit der normannischen Oberschicht angeregt mit ins Grab gegebene Zeugnisse einer in ganz Gallien verbreiteten Sitte zu sein. Ähnliche Kreuze mit und ohne Inschrift sind aus England im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert bekannt, wo sie, wie manche der französischen Exemplare auch, dem Schutz der Toten vor Dämonen gedient haben dürften. Den letzten Nachhall dieser Sitte bildet eine Gruppe südnorwegischer Kreuze mit Gebetsformeln, die offenbar in älteren Gräbern heidnische Mächte bannen sollten.

Gemeinsam ist den gallischen und englischen Exemplaren, daß es sich um eine Jenseitsausstattung des Toten handelte. Daneben trifft man in Gallien außer diesen Kreuzen – und weitaus häufiger als diese – in ganz gewöhnlichen Gräbern noch eine weitere Beigabe für das Jenseits an: Gefäße, die einst mit Holzkohle zur Verbrennung von Weihrauch gefüllt waren, damit der Tote gut rieche, wenn er vor Gott trete. Unschwer läßt sich dahinter die im Christentum geläufige symbolische Gleichsetzung des aufsteigenden Weihrauchs mit guten Werken erkennen, wiederum also Beweismaterial für das Jüngste Gericht. Weiterhin kennen wir solche Grabgefäße auch aus Dänemark in erheblicher Zahl aus der 2. Hälfte des 13. und dem 14. Jahrhundert, während sie in Frankreich bereits – mit zeitlicher Staffelung von Süd nach

⁴⁵ Cochet 1857, 316 f.

⁴⁶ So auch Ehrentraut 1951, 13.

⁴⁷ Knudsen 1995.

⁴⁸ Kat. London 1940, 290.

⁴⁹ Jörg 1984, Nr. 27; Ehrentraut 1951, 12.

Nord – im 11./12. Jahrhundert einsetzen und bis in den Barock sporadisch in Benutzung blieben⁵⁰. Ein ganz ähnliches zeitliches und räumliches Erscheinungsbild zeigen im übrigen die mittelalterlichen Pilgerabzeichen aus Gräbern, die gleichfalls unschwer als Beweismittel vor dem Richterstuhl Gottes zu erkennen sind, zumal die Pilgerfahrt ja gleichfalls mit einem Ablass verbunden war, dem Pilgerzeichen also ähnliche Bedeutung wie dem Absolutionsformular zukam⁵¹. In Dänemark ist mit dem Aufkommen dieser Beigaben zugleich ein Wechsel in der Armhaltung der Toten verbunden, denn seit der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts werden die Arme nicht mehr seitlich ausgestreckt, sondern im Becken zusammengelegt; zweifellos ist hier an eine Gebetshaltung gedacht, in der man vor Gott treten wollte, um so seinen christlichen Glauben zu manifestieren⁵². In Frankreich sind die Befunde zur Armhaltung weitaus verworrener, doch scheint sich auch hier entsprechend früher (im 10./11. Jahrhundert?) solch ein großräumiger Wechsel abzuzeichnen⁵³.

Wir erkennen damit in Westeuropa einen eigenen Bestattungskreis, der seine Toten mit Beigaben für das Jenseits, genauer mit Beweisstücken für ein christliches Leben und Sterben ausstattete, die beim Jüngsten Gericht vorgezeigt werden können. Versucht man diese Beigabensitte soziologisch einzuordnen, müssen wir vor allem in Gallien und England an die breite Masse der Bevölkerung denken; Kircheninnenbestattungen weisen in Gallien aber auch auf Stadtbürger und Niederadel hin. Nur in Dänemark scheinen daneben auch Angehörige der Oberschicht, Bischöfe und Königinnen etwa, vereinzelt mit solchen Beigaben für das Jenseits ausgestattet worden zu sein.

Im Rheinland und rechts des Rheins stehen diesen Beigaben für das Jenseits Grabauthentiken gegenüber, denen jeder Jenseitsbezug fehlt und die auf die Identifizierung des Toten bei einer möglichen späteren Graböffnung berechnet waren. Initiationscharakter mag hier der Öffnung des Grabes Karls des Großen im Jahr 1000 zugekommen sein, doch ist die Entstehung dieses Beigabentyps in Wechselwirkung mit den linksrheinischen Reliquienauthentiken nicht zu übersehen. Wenngleich zwischen dem 11. und 15. Jahrhundert ein gewisser sozialer Verfall der Grabauthentiken von Erzbischöfen und Kaisern zu einfachen Grafen hin nicht zu leugnen ist, bleibt diese

Extremform der Individualisierung doch stets ausgesprochenes Oberschichtmerkmal, das nicht in die Gräber der breiten Masse gelangte. Diesem Befund entsprechen die weiteren Beigaben solcher Oberschichtgräber: Krone, zuweilen auch Szepter und Reichsapfel in den Gräbern der Könige, Ring und Stab, Kelch und Patene in den Bischofsgräbern, bei beiden wie auch in den Gräbern anderer Adeltiger zuweilen Schwert und Sporen, dazu Gewänder, oft aus Seide. Wie den Grabauthentiken fehlt diesen Beigaben jeder eschatologische Gehalt. Offenkundig sind sie darauf berechnet, vor allem durch – oftmals eigens für den Grabbrauch angefertigte – Insignien bei einer späteren Öffnung des Grabes den Stand des Toten vor Augen zu führen.

Klar definiert sich hier ein diesseitsorientierter, mitteleuropäischer Bestattungskreis, der jedoch ein Privileg der Oberschicht bleibt. Als solches wird er auch in Gallien und Dänemark übernommen, wo es zu Überlappungen mit dem westeuropäischen Bestattungskreis kam, wodurch sich die Unterschiede beider Kreise noch stärker abzeichnen. Insbesondere für die frühesten Oberschichtgräber mit Grabauthentiken in Gallien sei nochmals daran erinnert, daß Authentiken dort ja seit der Jahrtausendwende Heiligen vorbehalten gewesen waren.

Individualität und Diesseits als Privilegien der Oberschicht? Das Jenseits als Perspektive der breiten Masse? Ist das die Aussage der mittelalterlichen Grabinschriften? Es ist zumindest die Aussage der geistlich inspirierten scharfen Kritik an der Diesseitigkeit des adeligen Hoflebens, und es ist die Grundlinie der Sozialkritik, die sich in den spätmittelalterlichen Totentänzen äußert⁵⁴. Auf der anderen Seite weisen gerade die Grabauthentiken der Oberschicht aufschlußreiche Gewichtungen dieser adeligen Diesseitigkeit auf: So nennt Gerd Althoff "vornehme Ahnen" und "außergewöhnlichen Reichtum" als Grundlagen mittelalterlichen weltlichen Ruhms, den man sich durch die "kriegerische Großtat", gepaart oft mit "List" bis hin zur Hinterlist oder "schlagfertig pointierter Stellungnahme" errang⁵⁵. In den Grabauthentiken finden von diesen Ruhmestaten die Ahnen bei Frauen rühmende Aufzählung, während bei den Männern einzig und äußerst selten kriegerische Großtaten gegen die Ungläubigen(!) zu Buche schlagen. Die weitaus häufigste Erwähnung gilt jedoch Kirchenbau und -ausstattung, Werken also, die auch im Jenseits schuld-

⁵⁰ Ariès 1982, 183; Madsen 1983; Durand 1988, 181 f.; Kieffer-Olsen 1993, 169 f.

⁵¹ Köster 1983; Kieffer-Olsen 1993, 170-175.

⁵² Kieffer-Olsen 1993, 75.

⁵³ Durand 1988, 172-175.

⁵⁴ Buhmke 1986, 583-594; Kaiser 1983, 36-38.

⁵⁵ Althoff 1988.

tilgend wirksam sind⁵⁶. Wenngleich sich der Tatenbericht der Grabauthentiken folglich kaum an den Taten höfischen Ruhms orientiert, sondern bevorzugt gottgefällige Werke nennt, wäre es doch verfehlt, ihn als Buch der guten Lebenstaten für das Jüngste Gericht, als günstige Gewichte bei der Seelenwägung zu verstehen⁵⁷. Denn zum einen waren diese gottgefälligen Werke, insbesondere wo es sich um gewaltige Kirchen oder goldprunkende Ausstattungen handelte, ebenso geeignet, das irdische Ansehen des Stifters zu erhöhen, zum anderen werden die eigentlichen guten christlichen Werke, etwa die Armenspeisung, nie in den Grabauthentiken erwähnt: Diese und andere entscheidende liturgische Jenseitssicherungen der Oberschicht erfolgten durch umfangreiche Stiftungen.

Den Tatenbericht der Grabauthentiken möchte ich daher als Kompromiß aus christlicher Hofkritik und weltlichem Ruhmbedürfnis verstehen⁵⁸. Insbesondere seitdem die Scholastik den Körper gegenüber der zuvor für autonom gehaltenen Seele wieder aufwertete, kam die Theologie massiv der Zeittendenz entgegen, dem Diesseits wieder einen höheren Stellenwert beizumessen⁵⁹. Zugleich spiegelt der eschatologische Wechsel vom Weltgericht zum Partikulargericht und die Verfestigung der Fegefeuer-Idee die aufgewertete Stellung des Individuums im Denken wieder⁶⁰. Nach Lage der Quellen entstanden Scholastik, Partikulargericht wie Fegefeuer im Frankreich des (späten) 12. Jahrhunderts, und es scheint daher kein Zufall zu sein, wenn kurz darauf auch die Grabauthentik Eingang in die Gräber der französischen Oberschicht fand.

Andererseits waren die Grabauthentiken im deutschen Reich wie bei den Normannen zu diesem Zeitpunkt schon seit zwei Jahrhunderten in Gebrauch – ein deutlicher Hinweis, daß sie eben nicht gewandelten theologischen Anschauungen und damit Erfordernissen entsprangen, sondern außerhalb der Theologie, also weltlich begründet lagen. Eine generelle Tendenz zur Individualisierung, wie sie sich etwa im cluniazensischen Totengedächtnis niederschlug, hatte ja schon im 9. Jahrhundert eingesetzt⁶¹, nur war sie in Frankreich eben bis zur Scholastik nicht in Grabbeigaben umgesetzt worden. Daß weiter östlich dagegen schon ab der Jahrtausendwende individualisierende Authentiken ins Grab gegeben

wurden, scheint an tiefgreifende Unterschiede zwischen Mentalitäten zu rühren, denn später führten ja auch die Entwicklungen von Partikulargericht, Fegefeuer und Scholastik am Rhein und weiter östlich zu keinen Veränderungen in der Grabausstattung. Es scheint mir in den Diskussionen um die Mentalitätengeschichte zumindest was das Thema "Tod" betrifft bislang zuwenig beachtet worden zu sein, daß sie ihre Ergebnisse vor allem an französischen Bild- und Schriftquellen erarbeitete. Wie aber verlief die Rezeption dieser französischen Entwicklungen? Wie steht es mit andersgearteten Mentalitäten im deutschen Reich, in England und anderswo?

Den Gegenpol zu den Grabauthentiken verkörpern Absolutions- und andere Kreuze, Weihrauchgefäße und Pilgerzeichen aus den Gräbern der breiten Masse in Gallien. Allein aufgrund ihrer Zeitstellung dürfen wir insbesondere für die Kreuze annehmen, daß sie der älteren Vorstellung vom Weltgericht entsprungen sind, in dem es für die Aufnahme in den Himmel genügte, allein als gläubiger Christ ausgewiesen zu sein⁶². Hinzu kam die Schutzfunktion solcher Kreuze während des Ausharrens im *refrigerium interim* bis das Gericht anbrach. Daß solche jenseitsorientierten Beigaben im Rheinland und weiter östlich fehlen, dürfte vollkommen mit den soeben aufgrund der Grabauthentiken vermuteten Mentalitätsunterschieden harmonieren. Andererseits springt es geradezu ins Auge, daß diese Beigaben auch die beschriebenen großen Umwälzungen in den Jenseitsvorstellungen im späten 12. Jahrhundert unbeschadet überstanden und bis in den Barock weiterhin in Gräber gelangten. Ein Verdacht keimt auf: Entsprechen die von der Mentalitätengeschichte herausgearbeiteten Entwicklungen tatsächlich den kollektiven Einstellungen der breiten Masse? Immerhin stützen sich auch Philippe Ariès, Jacques Le Goff und andere in weiten Teilen – und mangels Alternativen – auf lateinische Schriftquellen und höfische Dichtung, Texte der gebildeten Oberschicht also, jener Oberschicht, die auch die Bildlichkeit des Mittelalters diktierte, die andere wichtige Quellengattung der "Geschichte des Todes". Wäre es nicht denkbar, daß die schriftunkundigen Schichten der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft, deren einziges historisches Zeugnis ihr Grab ist, zäh an den alten Jenseitsvor-

⁵⁶ Bergmann 1985, 120 f. u. öfter.

⁵⁷ Ariès 1982, 133 f.; Angenendt 1984, 193-195.

⁵⁸ In gleicher Weise ist ja die Sepulkralplastik seit dem 12. Jahrhundert ein Kompromiß, indem sie den Toten mit geöffneten Augen stehend-liegend in Erwartung der Auferstehung darstellt und zugleich weltlichem Repräsentationsbedürfnis

Rechnung trägt (Angenendt 1984, 116 f.).

⁵⁹ Angenendt 1984, 111-113; Goff 1991, 281.

⁶⁰ Ariès 1982, 128-131; Goff 1991, 282-284.

⁶¹ Angenendt 1984, 185-187; Goff 1991, 154.

⁶² Ariès 1982, 125-128; Goff 1991, 282.

stellungen festhielten und nur äußerst langsam die theologischen Neuerungen etwa einer Scholastik rezipierten? Wilhelm von Auvergne ereiferte sich schon in der ersten Hälfte des 13. Jahrhunderts, daß es noch immer Leute gebe, die glaubten, die Seele könne aus einem eisernen Kasten ohne jede Öffnung nicht entweichen – offenkundig die alte, vorscholastische Vorstellung von der Seele als eigener, mit einem Körper begabter Person⁶³. Wilhelm hätte sich noch länger ereifern können, denn noch in unserem Jahrhundert war es in einigen ländlichen Gegenden Brauch, ein Fenster zu öffnen oder einen Dachziegel abzuheben, wenn ein Moribunder den letzten Atemzug getan hatte – damit die Seele das Haus verlassen könne⁶⁴! Was wäre ein besseres Beispiel, mit welcher Zähigkeit die einfache Bevölkerung allen theologischen Innovationen zum Trotz an überbrachten Glaubensvorstellungen festhielt?

Literatur

- G. ALTHOFF 1984: *Adels-und Königsfamilien im Spiegel ihrer Memorialüberlieferung. Studien zum Totengedenken der Billunger und Ottonen*, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 47, München.
- G. ALTHOFF 1988: Gloria et nomen perpetuum. Wodurch wurde man im Mittelalter berühmt? In: G. ALTHOFF, D. GEUENICH, O. G. OEXLE & J. WOLLASCH (Hrsgg.), *Person und Gemeinschaft im Mittelalter = Festschrift Karl Schmid*, Sigmaringen, 297-313.
- A. ANGENENDT 1984: Theologie und Liturgie der mittelalterlichen Toten-Memoria. In: Schmid & Wollasch 1984, 79-199.
- Ph. ARIÈS 1982: *Geschichte des Todes*, München.
- U. BERGMANN 1985: PRIOR OMNIBUS AUTOR – an höchster Stelle aber steht der Stifter. In: *Ornamenta Ecclesiae. Kunst und Künstler der Romanik. Katalog Ausstellung Köln 1985*, 1, 117-148.
- P. BINSKI 1996: *Medieval death. Ritual and representation*, London.
- E. LE BLANT 1856: *Inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule antérieures au VIIIe siècle*, Paris.
- A. BOOCKMANN 1993: *Die Inschriften der Stadt Braunschweig bis 1528*, Die deutschen Inschriften 35, Wiesbaden.
- I. BORKOVSKÝ 1975: *Svatojirská Bazilika a klášter na Pražském hrade*, Monumenta Archaeologica 18, Praha.
- J. BUHMKE 1986: *Höfische Kultur. Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter*, München.
- J.-B. COCHET 1857: *Sépultures gauloises, romaines, franques et normandes*, Paris.
- F. DANIELE 1784: *I regali sepolcri del duomo di Palermo*, Neapel.
- M. DURAND 1988: *Archéologie du cimetière médiéval au sud-est de l'Oise du VIIème au XVIème siècle. Relations avec l'habitat, évolution des rites et de pratiques funéraires, paléodémographie*, Revue archéologique de Picardie. Num. Spécial, Chevières.
- H. EHRENTAUT 1951: *Bleierne Inschrifttafeln aus mittelalterlichen Gräbern*, Diss. masch., Bonn.
- H. EHRENTAUT 1952: *Bleierne Inschrifttafeln aus mittelalterlichen Gräbern der Rheinlande*, *Bonner Jahrbücher* 152, 190-225.
- A. ERLANDE-BRANDENBURG 1975: *Le roi est mort. Étude sur les funérailles, les sépultures et les tombeaux des rois de France jusqu'à la fin du XIIIe siècle*, Bibliothèque de la Société Française d'Archéologie 7, Paris.
- R. FAVREAU & J. MICHAUD 1979: *Dordogne, Gironde*, Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale 5, Poitiers.
- J. LE GOFF 1991²: *Die Geburt des Fegefeuers. Vom Wandel des Weltbildes im Mittelalter*, München.
- A.M. HAAS 1989: *Todesbilder im Mittelalter. Fakten und Hinweise in der deutschen Literatur*, Darmstadt.
- N. HERRMANN-MASCARD 1975: *Les reliques des saints. Formation coutumière d'un droit*, Collection d'Histoire Institutionnelle et Sociale 6, Paris.
- Chr. JÖRG 1977: *Die Inschriften des Kantons Wallis bis 1300*, Corpus inscriptionum medii aevi Helvetiae 1 = Scriptorium Friburgense Sonderband 1, Freiburg.
- Chr. JÖRG 1984: *Die Inschriften der Kantone Freiburg, Genf, Jura, Neuenburg und Waadt*, Corpus inscriptionum medii aevi Helvetiae 2 = Scriptorium Friburgense Sonderband 2, Freiburg.
- G. KAISER 1983: *Der ianzende Tod. Mittelalterliche Totentänze*, Frankfurt/Main.
- Katalog Ausstellung Hildesheim 1993: *Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen*, Mainz.
- Katalog London 1940: J.R. WARD PERKINS, *Medieval Catalogue*, London (Nachdruck 1975).
- Katalog Ausstellung Zürich/Köln 1994: P. JEZLER, *Himmel Hölle Fegefeuer. Das Jenseits im Mittelalter. Katalog Ausstellung Zürich/Köln 1994*.
- J. KIEFFER-OLSEN 1993: *Grav og gravskik i det middelalderlige Danmark – 8 kirkegårdsudgravninger*, Aarhus.
- A. M. KNUDSEN 1995: *Kristne kors i hedenske gravar*, *Arkeo* 1, 22-26.

⁶³ Angenendt 1984, 112.

⁶⁴ Haas 1989, 61.

- K. KÖSTER 1983: *Pilgerzeichen und Pilgermuscheln von mittelalterlichen Santiagostraßen. Saint-Léonard, Rocamadour, Saint-Gilles, Santiago de Compostela: Schleswiger Funde und Gesamtüberlieferung*, Ausgrabungen in Schleswig. Berichte und Studien 2, Neumünster.
- H. E. KUBACH & A. VERBEEK 1976: *Romanische Baukunst an Rhein und Maas. Katalog der vorromanischen und romanischen Denkmäler*, Berlin.
- J. LAUDAGE 1995: Symbole der Politik – Politik der Symbole. Lothar III. als Herrscherpersönlichkeit. In: J. LUCKHARDT & F. NIEHOFF (Hrsgg.), *Heinrich der Löwe und seine Zeit. Herrschaft und Repräsentation der Welfen 1125-1235. Katalog Ausstellung Braunschweig 1995*, 2, 91-104.
- P.K. MADSEN 1983: A french connection: Danish funerary pots – a group of medieval pottery, *Journal of Danish Archaeology* 2, 171-183.
- W. MENGHIN 1985: *Die Langobarden. Archäologie und Geschichte*, Stuttgart.
- E. MÖLLER & E. NYBORG 1979/83: *Ribe Domkirke, Danmarks Kirker*, København.
- F. NERINIUS 1752: *De templo et coenobio sanctorum Bonifacii et Alexii historica monumenta*, Romae.
- E. OKASHA 1996: *The lead cross of bishop Godfrey of Chichester*, Sussex Archaeological Collections 134.
- K. SCHMID & J. WOLLASCH (Hrsgg.) 1984: *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 48, München.
- S. SCHOLZ 1994: *Die Inschriften des Landkreises Bergstraße*, Die deutschen Inschriften 38, Wiesbaden.
- P.E. SCHRAMM & F. MÜTHERICH 1981²: *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser. Ein Beitrag zur Herrschergeschichte von Karl dem Großen bis Friedrich II. 768-1250*, Veröffentlichungen des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte in München 2, München.
- E.E. STENGEL 1939: Die Grabschrift der ersten Äbtissin von Quedlinburg, *Deutsches Archiv für Geschichte des Mittelalters* 3, 361-370.

Das Grab des Erzbischofs Gottfried von Bremen (†1363) in Stade

1 Einleitung

Vor 20 Jahren hat Karl Heinz Brandt im Rahmen seiner Grabung im Bremer Dom auch die Sepultur der Bremer Erzbischöfe untersuchen können (Brandt 1988). Die 24 ausgegrabenen Bischofs- und Erzbischofsbestattungen haben einen einzigartigen Einblick in Begräbnisritus und Grabausstattung der Kirchenfürsten und die ihnen zugrundeliegenden Vorstellungen über Tod und Jenseits ermöglicht. Die Bearbeitung der Gewandreste der durchweg im vollen Ornat begrabenen Erzbischöfe steht kurz vor dem Abschluß und dürfte die Kenntnis der mittelalterlichen Textilerstellung in Europa erheblich bereichern. Wichtiger noch ist die Tatsache, daß sich aufgrund der breiten Materialbasis eine deutliche Regelmäßigkeit für Begräbnisritus und Grabausstattung abzeichnet, ob mit Ausnahmen und Abweichungen, ist noch nicht sicher.

Schon Brandt hat darauf hingewiesen, daß nicht alle Bremer Erzbischöfe im Bremer Dom begraben worden sind. Insgesamt ist für 13 Erzbischöfe belegt, daß sie – aus unterschiedlichen Gründen – andernorts beigesetzt wurden, vielleicht ist die Zahl auch noch höher. Einer von ihnen ist Gottfried von Arnsberg, der nach der Chronistik 1360 resignierte und 1363 in Stade begraben wurde. Stade, eine der wenigen weiteren Städte des Bremer Erzstifts und zeitweise Nebenresidenz der Erzbischöfe, liegt etwa 100 km von Bremen entfernt (Abb. 1). 1993 wurde Gottfrieds Bestattung bei einer Stader Altstadtgrabung aufgedeckt.

Im folgenden soll dieses Grab vorgestellt werden. Es verdient aus verschiedenen Gründen unser Interesse. Einmal – naheliegenderweise – als Ergänzung zu den Bestattungen im Bremer Dom. Zweitens wegen der Besonderheit der Tatsache, daß es sich um einen Erzbischof handelt, der resigniert, also seine Insignien eigentlich zurückgegeben hatte, so daß sich die Frage stellt, ob diese Minderung des Status Einfluß auf den Grabritus hatte. Hinzu kommt – dies sei im Vorgriff auf den Grabungsbefund angeführt – daß die Bestattung zu den Ledersack-Beisetzungen gehört und auch zu diesem Phänomen unsere Erkenntnis erweitert.

Zunächst ist kurz auf die historischen Nachrichten zu dieser Bestattung einzugehen.

2 Der resignierte Erzbischof Gottfried und seine Beisetzung in der Stader Stiftskirche St. Georg – die schriftliche Überlieferung

1348 war es zu einer Doppelbesetzung des vakant gewordenen Bremer Erzstuhls gekommen (Elmshäuser 1995, 180 f.). Derartige Doppelwahlen waren im späten Mittelalter keine Seltenheit, als mit der Ausbildung der Landesherrschaft die Stifte und Erzstifte in zunehmendem Maße in die Interessenpolitik der konkurrierenden Adelsfamilien einbezogen wurden (Lexikon MA, Bd. 2, Sp. 227). Die Mehrheit des Bremer und Hamburger Domkapitels hatte den Bremer Domdekan Moritz aus der Familie der Grafen von Oldenburg zum Erzbischof gewählt, der schon vorher 3 Jahre lang als Administrator für den kranken Vor-

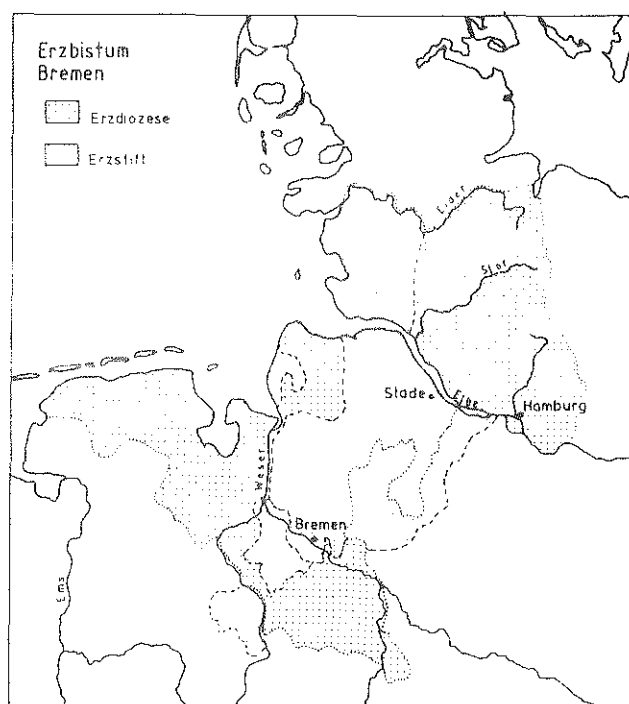


Abb. 1. - Das Erzbistum Bremen Mitte des 14. Jh.

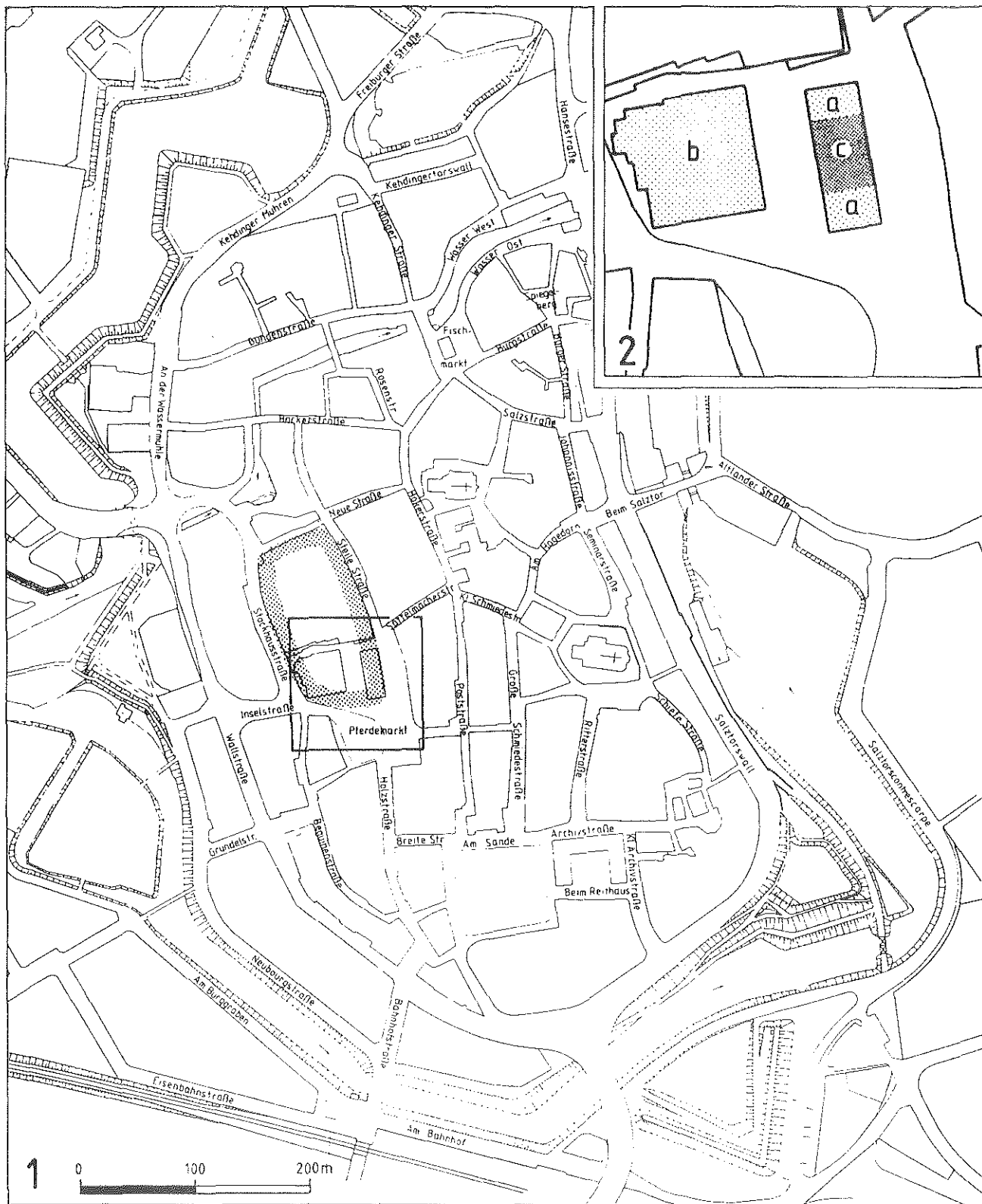


Abb. 2. - 1 Stade, Altstadtgrundriß mit dem Bezirk des ehemaligen Prämonstratenserstifts St. Georg (gerasterter Rand).
 - 2 Ausschnitt: Lageplan der archäologischen Untersuchungen im Bereich der Stiftskirche St. Georg, a: Baustellenbeobachtung beim Umbau des Zeughauses 1952, b: Grabung vor der Errichtung der Stadt-Sparkasse 1960, c: Grabung vor der Sanierung des Zeughauses 1992-1996.

gänger die Amtsgeschäfte geführt hatte. Papst Clemens II. jedoch verweigerte ihm die Bestätigung und vergab die Erzbischofswürde an den unterlegenen Gegenkandidaten Gottfried aus der Grafenfamilie von

Arnsberg, den bisherigen Bischof von Osnabrück. 1997, 7). Die Folge war ein langjähriger Machtkampf, der als die Bremer Erzbischofsfehde bekannt geworden ist. 1350 kam es zu einem Kompromiß, der

Gottfried faktisch entmachtete. Moritz verzichtete auf den Erzbischofstitel, behielt aber als Administrator die Verwaltungsfunktionen und war damit der eigentliche Landesherr, während Gottfried auf die Erzbischofswürde und die geistlichen Funktionen reduziert wurde. Im weiteren Verlauf der Auseinandersetzung mit dem übermächtigen Gegner ließ sich Gottfried von dem mit ihm verbündeten Grafen von Hoya schließlich zur Aufgabe bewegen: Um den Herzog Magnus von Braunschweig-Lüneburg zum Eingreifen als Bundesgenosse zu gewinnen, bot er ihm das Erzbistum für seinen Sohn Albert an. Nach 2jährigen Verhandlungen an der Kurie wurde der Papst für die Nachfolgeregelung gewonnen. Gottfried resignierte im Juli 1360.

Er zog sich zunächst nach Hamburg zurück, dann nach Stade, in dem er schon vorher zweimal für eine gewisse Zeit residiert hatte (Bohmbach 1996, 7). Gottfried starb, so die Nachricht der Bremer Erzbischofschronik, am 4. Dezember 1363 in Stade und wurde hier auch beigesetzt (Lappenberg 1841, 224).

Die lapidare Chronikstelle liefert für die Form der Bestattung aufschlußreiche Angaben, die ich festhalten möchte.

1. Gottfried wird im Chor des Prämonstratenserstifts St. Georg begraben. Die Kirche des 1132 gegründeten St. Georgs-Stifts war nach der schriftlichen Überlieferung die unbestritten dominierende Kirche Stades, bei der z. B. die Pfarrechte für alle Stader Stadtkirchen lagen. Wichtiger noch: die Angabe über die Bestattung im Chor, dem Kirchenteil, in dem das gesamte Mittelalter hindurch Beisetzungen nur ausnahmsweise zugelassen wurden.

2. Mitgeteilt wird außerdem der Wortlaut der Grabinschrift: „*Anno Domini MCCCXLIII in die beatae Barbarae obiit vernerabilis pater, dominus Godefridus, nobilis de Arnesberghe, sanctae Bremensis Ecclesiae Archiepiscopus, hic sepultus. Orate pro eo, qui per XII annos iniustas iniurias a suis fuit passus: sed tribulantes eum graviter a Deo puniti fuerunt.*“ Wir sehen, daß Gottfried als Erzbischof bezeichnet wird, die resignatio wird nicht erwähnt. Bei der Bezugnahme auf sein Schicksal werden Wendungen gebraucht, die in die Nähe der Formulierungen für Märtyrerverfolgungen führen. Mit dem Schlußsatz wird das direkte Eingreifen Gottes dargestellt, der die Peiniger bereits schwer bestraft habe, eine Wendung, mit der nahegelegt wird, daß für den Erzbischof ein gnädiges Gericht zu erwarten ist.

3 Der archäologische Befund

3.1 Die Grabung

Das Prämonstratenserstift St. Georg ist mitsamt seiner Kirche nach der Reformation aufgegeben worden und – nach einer vorübergehenden Wiedernutzung der Kirchenruine um 1600 – durch Überbauung in den folgenden Jahrhunderten vollkommen aus dem Stader Stadtbild verschwunden. Im ehemaligen Standortbereich der Kirche befinden sich heute das gegen Ende des 17. Jh. zur Zeit der Schwedenherrschaft errichtete Zeughaus und ein großes Sparkassengebäude (Abb. 2.1).

Durch stadtarchäologische Untersuchungen sehr unterschiedlichen Charakters, die sich über gut 40 Jahre verteilten, konnten große Teile des ehemaligen Kirchenareals erfaßt werden (Abb. 2.2). Nach einer Baustellenbeobachtung 1952 und einer Grundrißgrabung 1960 wurde 1992 eine über 4 Jahre ausgedehnte Untersuchung mit modernen Grabungsmethoden möglich, die vor allem dem Ostchor galt und bei der auch das Erzbischofsgrab aufgedeckt wurde.

Vor den Untersuchungsergebnissen zur Beisetzung soll hier kurz auch ein erster Versuch zur Rekonstruktion der Kirche des 14. Jh. vorgestellt werden, die für den Gesamtzusammenhang dieser Grablage nicht ohne Bedeutung ist.

3.2 Die Prämonstratenserkirche St. Georg

Die St. Georgskirche läßt sich in ihrem spätmittelalterlichen Endzustand – zur Zeit der Erzbischofsbestattung – als dreischiffige eingewölbte Kirche von rd. 70 Metern Länge und 28 Metern Breite rekonstruieren (Abb. 3). Noch ist offen, ob das Gebäude zunächst eine Basilika war, die später umgebaut

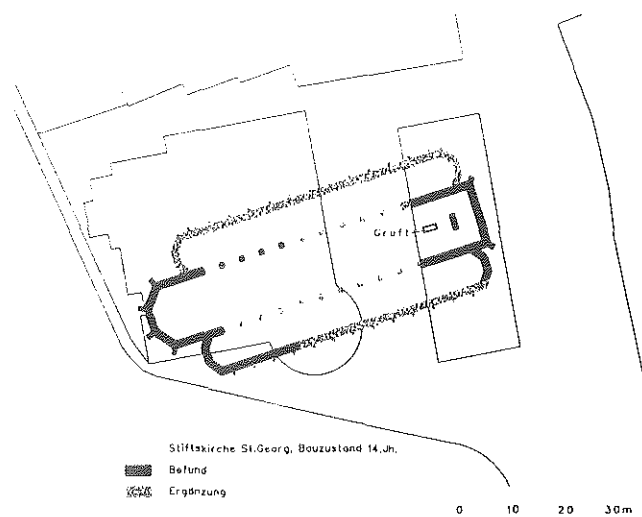


Abb. 3. - Stade. Die Stiftskirche St. Georg im 14. Jh., Grundriß mit der Grablage des Bremer Erzbischofs Gottfried vor dem Hauptaltar des Ostchors, Grabungsbefund mit Ergänzungen (Arbeitsstand März 1997).

wurde, die Stadtansichten des 16. Jh. zeigen eine gestufte Hallenkirche. Mit diesen Dimensionen war die Kirche der mit Abstand größte und aufwendigste Sakralbau Stades und – nach dem Bremer Dom und neben den Hamburger Hauptkirchen – auch des Erzstifts Bremen. Auch an der Besonderheit eines Westchors ist die herausgehobene Stellung der Kirche ablesbar. Die einzige weitere Doppelchorkirche im Erzstift war wiederum der Bremer Dom.

3.3 Die Grablege

Im Chor des 14. Jh. – stratigrafisch datiert durch die Errichtung über einer um 1300 verfüllten Krypta – fand sich in zentraler Position vor dem Fundamentrest des Hauptaltars eine Kammergrab-Bestattung (Abb. 3-5). Aufgrund zahlreicher mit der schriftli-

chen Nachricht übereinstimmender und sich gegenseitig stützender Indizien – so der Lage des Grabes, dem für den Toten durch die anthropologische Untersuchung ermittelten Sterbealter von 63-70 Lebensjahren (Prechel in Vorb.) und der im folgenden zu beschreibenden Grabausstattung konnte sie als die Beisetzung des Erzbischofs identifiziert werden. Der obere Bereich der Kammer und ihre Abdeckung fehlten, sie waren bereits Ende des 16. Jh. entfernt worden, mit nachfolgender Anlegung einer Reihe frühneuzeitlicher Gräber über der verfüllten Grabruine. Dennoch erwies sich die erzbischöfliche Bestattung – abgesehen von einem gezielten Eingriff, über den noch zu sprechen sein wird – als völlig ungestört.

Festzuhalten ist gleich einleitend noch einmal die extreme Lage der Beisetzung: im Chor in der Kirchenachse, 2 ½ Meter vor dem Hochaltar. In diesem Bereich wie in allen Partien des Chors überhaupt, in



Abb. 4. - Stade, Bestattung des Erzbischofs Gottfried von Bremen in einer Lederhülle, Grabungsfotos.

1: Der Kopfbereich mit der Lederhülle,

2: Der Kopfbereich nach Entfernung der Lederhülle: die Zutage getretene Schuttschicht als Niederschlag des Grabraubs.



denen die Eucharistie gefeiert wurde, wurden Gräber nur in Ausnahmefällen geduldet (Illi 1994, 61). Solche Ausnahmen bildeten anfangs nur die Beisetzungen von Altar- und Kirchenstiftern – so ist z. B. Otto d. Große im Magdeburger Dom in der Mitte des hohen Chores beigesetzt worden –, dann schließlich auch von anderen weltlichen wie geistlichen Fürsten, wobei es regionale Unterschiede gab (Zoepfl 1948, 341 ff.). Bemerkenswerterweise lag auch die Sepulchur der Erzbischöfe im Bremer Dom bereits im frühen Mittelalter im Chor und im Vorchor und wurde anscheinend nur aus bautechnischen Gründen im hohen und späten Mittelalter mit dem Dom-Neubau ins östliche Mittelschiff gerückt (Vgl. Brandt 1988, 4 ff. u. 18 f.) Vergleichbar mit der Stader Bestattung ist auch die fast zeitgleiche Beisetzung des Lübecker Bischofs Heinrich II. von Bocholt (†1341), der sich im Lübecker Dom ebenfalls in der Mitte des Chors vor dem Hauptaltar begraben ließ, mit einer Bronzetaumba über seinem Grab, die ihn als Bauherrn bzw. Stifter darstellte (Fehring 1992, 9).

Die aus Backsteinen gemauerte Kammer von 2,10 Metern lichter Länge, 0,70 Metern lichter Breite und einer Tiefe von 1,30 Metern wies innen sorgfältig abgestrichene Mörtelfugen auf, nicht belegen ließ sich ein evtl. ursprünglich vorhandener Verputz mit einer möglichen Bemalung. Als Abdeckung ist eine Grabplatte zu erschließen. Denkbar wären zwar auch Holzbohlen, wie sie bei einigen der Erzbischofsgräber im Bremer Dom angetroffen wurden, doch macht die überlieferte Grabinschrift, die sich kaum an den 4 bzw. 5 Metern entfernten Chorwänden befinden kann, eine Grabplatte als Schriftträger wahrscheinlich. Der ungeflieste Boden der Kammer war mit weißem Sand abgestreut.

Ein Sarg war nicht zu erkennen. Der Leichnam ruhte auf einer – nur noch in Resten erhaltenen – Holzlade, die auf ein Steinkissen am Kopfende und zwei Reihen von Standsteinen gestellt war. Umgeben war der Tote zur Gänze von einer Lederhülle (Abb. 4). Die Hülle, über deren Deutung noch zu sprechen sein wird, ist sekundär – nach dem Grabungsbefund wahrscheinlich in der 2. Hälfte des 16. Jh. – aufgebrochen oder aufgeschnitten, das Skelett bis zur Körpermitte und bis zu den dort zusammengelegten Händen aufgedeckt und anschließend wieder mit der Hülle zugedeckt worden. Bei dem Vorgang, als dessen Niederschlag eine bis zu 10 cm starke, hineingefallene Schuttschicht zwischen Skelett und Hülle nur im Oberkörper- und Kopfbereich zurückblieb, handelte es sich um einen Grabraub, wie gleich zu erörtern ist.

Der Tote war in Rückenlage beigesetzt, mit im Schoß zum Gebet zusammengelegten Händen. Auf der Brust lag die stark korrodierte eiserne Krümme

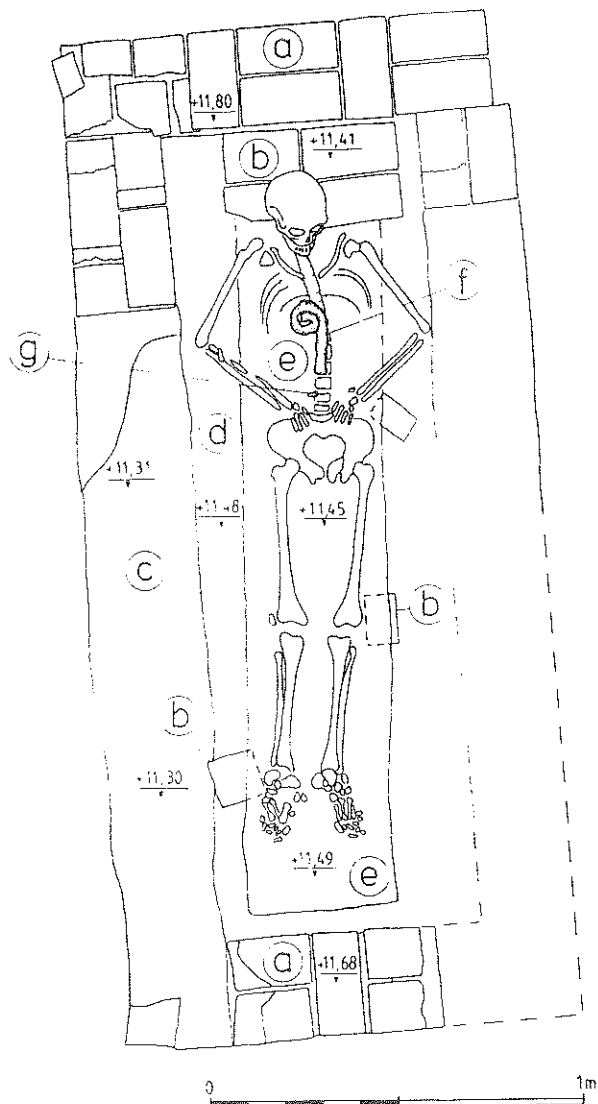


Abb. 5. - Stade, Bestattung des Erzbischofs Gottfried.
a: Reste des Backsteinmauerwerks der Grabkammer;
b: Standsteine für das Totenbrett;
c: Sandbettung des Mauerwerks;
d: weiße Sandschicht;
e: Totenbrett mit Resten des Lederhülle;
f: Krümme des Bischofsstabes mit Textilresten;
g: Riemenzunge.

eines Bischofsstabes, dessen vergangener Holzschaft sich von der Curva abwärts bis in die zusammengelegten Hände rekonstruieren ließ. Ein Bischofsring war nicht aufzufinden, doch läßt das Fehlen sämtlicher Fingerglieder – 3 dieser Knochen fanden sich verlagert im Schulterbereich – bei im übrigen ungestörten Skelett nur den Schluß zu, daß ein entsprechender Ring bei der geschilderten Öffnung der Lederhülle gesucht und entwendet worden ist. Daß bei dieser Gelegenheit auch Kelch und Patene, die meist im Schulterbereich mit beigesetzten Insignien des Priesteramtes, entnommen wurden, kann zumindest als möglich notiert werden.

Weiter ließen sich an der korrodierten eisernen Curva in einem begrenzten Ausschnitt erhaltene Gewandreste nachweisen, deren textilwissenschaftliche Bearbeitung Aufschlüsse über mehrere übereinanderliegende geistliche Gewänder erbrachte.

Schließlich fand sich noch im Bauchbereich eine eiserne Riemenzunge als Hinweis auf einen Gürtel.

Soweit dieser erste Überblick über den Grab-Befund, demzufolge der Tote – in Pontifikalgewändern, mit Stab, Ring und wahrscheinlich auch Kelch und Patene – in der auf Vollständigkeit angelegten Ausstattung beigesetzt worden zu sein scheint, wie sie bereits aus einer Reihe archäologisch untersuchter Bischofs- und Erzbischofsgräber bekannt ist, so auch

aus mehreren der Bremer Domgräber (Vgl. Brandt 1988, Gräber 18, 19, 23)

Sehen wir uns die erhaltenen Teile des Grabinventars nun im einzelnen an.

3.4 Der Bischofsstab (Abb. 6.1)

Der Bischofsstab ist mit seiner aus Eisen hergestellten Krümme unter den mir bisher bekannt gewordenen Stäben ein Unikat. In der Formgebung freilich entspricht die Curva, die nach einer 1 1/2 fachen Einrollung in Gestalt eines Blattwerks endet, das nach Röntgenaufnahmen als Dreiblatt geschmiedet sein könnte, durchaus einem im 14. Jh. verbreiteten Typus. Der übliche Nodus fehlt, wahrscheinlich hat er als gesondertes Teil auf dem Schaft aufgesessen. Das Holz des Schaftes ließ sich durch die Analyse eines in der Tülle erhalten gebliebenen Restes als Kernobstgewächs bestimmen, eine Gruppe, zu der z. B. der Weißdorn zählt (Meier in Vorb.). Die metallurgische Untersuchung der Krümme ergab an zahlreichen Stellen der Oberfläche den Nachweis von Zinnoxid-Resten, so daß eine ursprünglich flächendeckende Verzinnung zu erschließen ist (Aнемüller in Vorb.). Außerdem ließen sich im unteren Bereich der Krümme Spuren einer Kupfertauchierung freilegen, Reste eines Dekors oder vielleicht auch eines umlaufenden Schriftzuges, möglicherweise mit dem Namen des Toten.

Obwohl die Krümme mit ihrer wahrscheinlich silberähnlich glänzenden Oberfläche und dem Dekor der Kupferzeichen nicht ohne repräsentative Wirkung gewesen sein dürfte, der Werkstoff Eisen macht es unwahrscheinlich, daß dies der originale Amtstab des Erzbischofs gewesen ist. Wir können davon ausgehen, daß es sich um ein eigens für die Bestattung angefertigtes Stück handelt. Damit ist die Beisetzung ein weiteres Beispiel für die allgemein bei den mittelalterlichen Grablegen weltlicher wie geistlicher Würdenträger zu beobachtende Praxis, den Toten statt der Originalinsignien Kopien und Ersatzanfertigungen mitzugeben (Fehring 1979, 569). Auch mehrere der Erzbischofsgräber im Bremer Dom, in denen Peda nachgewiesen werden konnten, waren mit derartigen Ersatzanfertigungen ausgestattet, zumeist Nachbildungen metallener Krümmen in Holz mit Bemalung oder auch Vergoldung (Brandt 1988, Gräber 5, 7, 10). In einigen der Beisetzungen wurden dagegen unzweifelhaft ehemalige Amtsstäbe angetroffen (Brandt 1988, Gräber 18, 19, 23), doch ist zu fragen, ob diese Stäbe tatsächlich auch die Insignien der Toten waren oder nicht vielleicht älteres, bereits ausgemustertes Gerät (Vgl. Reinle 1988, 261). Diese Tendenz zur Ersatzausstattung oder zur Verwendung ausgemus-

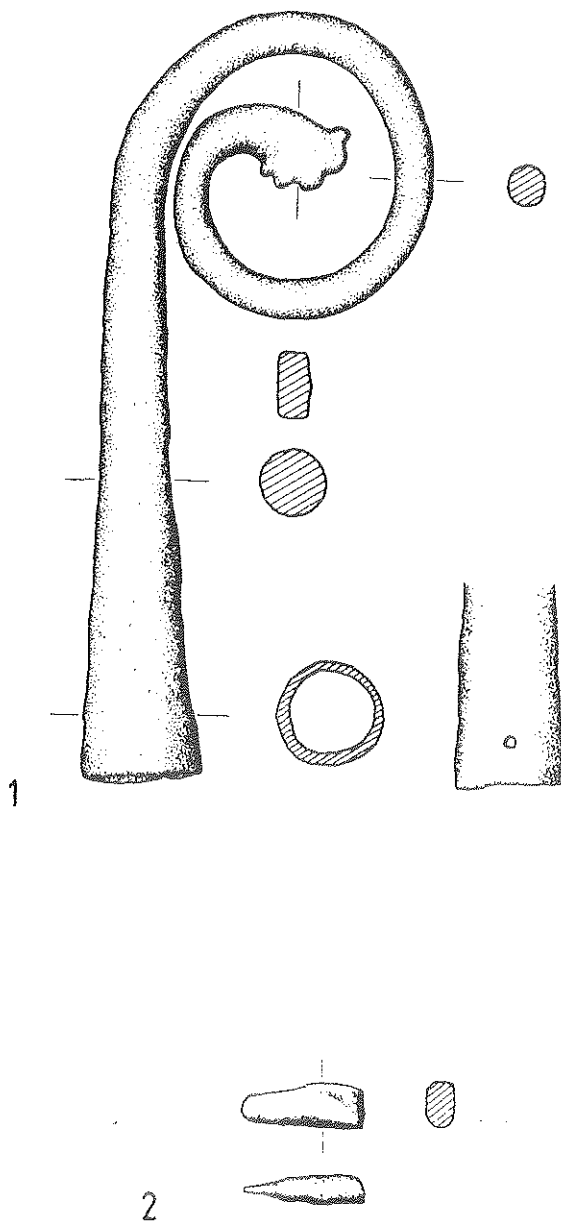


Abb. 6. - Stade, Bestattung des Erzbischofs Gottfried.
1: Krümme des Bischofsstabes, Eisen; 2: Riemenzunge, Eisen. - M. 1:2.

terten, oft auch beschädigten Geräts ist darüberhinaus bei allen Teilen der Grabinventare zu bemerken, bei den Ringen, bei den Kelchen und Patenen und schließlich bei der liturgischen Gewandung, und auch hier stellt sich die Frage, ob es sich wirklich nur um eine Tendenz gehandelt hat oder nicht vielmehr um ein ausnahmslos durchgeführtes Prinzip, so daß die abweichenden Einzelfälle noch entsprechend abzuklären wären. Ich komme später noch einmal auf diesen Aspekt zurück.

Einzugehen ist noch auf einen besonderen Punkt, die Lage des Stabes. Die Position in den gefalteten Händen scheint ungewöhnlich. Die übliche Lage z. B. bei allen Bestattungen im Bremer Dom war die an der Seite des Toten, wie sie dem Hirtengestus entspricht. Hier sei zumindest die Möglichkeit angesprochen, daß die abweichende Haltung des Stabes durch Gottfried mit seiner Amtsrückgabe in Zusammenhang zu bringen ist. Andererseits kann diese Lage des Stabes vielleicht auch ganz zwanglos aus der Tatsache zu erklären sein, daß der Tote in eine enge Lederhülle eingenäht wurde.

3.5 Die Reste der Paramente

Bei den an der Unterseite der eisernen Curva durch die Korrosionssalze konservierten Textilresten ließen sich insgesamt mindestens 4 übereinanderliegende Gewänder unterscheiden (Ruß in Vorb.). Festgestellt wurden die Gewebetypen Leinwand, Seidenrips, Samit mit Wabenstruktur und Samit mit „Doubleface“-Effekt. Sie sind wahrscheinlich als Albe, Dalmatik und Kasel mit Kaselbesatz zu identifizieren.

Der trotz aller Einschränkungen durch die Erhaltungsbedingungen aussagekräftige Befund an der Krümme gibt Grund zu der Annahme – aber es ist natürlich nur eine Annahme –, daß wahrscheinlich auch die an anderen Körperpartien zu erwartenden Kleidungsstücke und Insignien, wie Pontifikalschuhe und -handschuhe, Mitra, Manipel und anderes vorhanden waren und der Tote mit der vollständigen Ausstattung bischöflicher Paramente bestattet wurde.

Entsprechend der Position der Krümme direkt über dem Brustbein des Toten wäre bei einem nicht resignierten Erzbischof zusätzlich auch noch der Nachweis des Palliums durch Reste des Wollstoffs oder der seidenen Palliumskreuze zu erwarten gewesen. Das offensichtliche Fehlen dieses besonderen, vom Papst verliehenen und den Erzbischöfen regelmäßig im Original mit ins Grab gegebenen Würdezeichens in Gottfrieds Grab-Ausstattung ist wohl mit der bindenden Regelung zu erklären, daß jeder abgesetzte oder resignierte Erzbischof das Pallium umgehend zurückzugeben hatte (Braun 1907, 623). Anders

formuliert: Im archäologischen Befund des Stader Grabes zeigt sich, daß diese kanonische Vorschrift für den Beisetzungsritus eines resignierten Erzbischofs hier anscheinend befolgt wurde.

Nichts beitragen konnte die textilwissenschaftliche Untersuchung freilich zu der Frage, ob Gottfried entsprechend der üblichen Praxis in bereits abgelegten Gewändern aus älterer Zeit bestattet wurde, für diesen Zweck waren die erhaltenen Gewebereste zu klein (Ruß in Vorb.)

3.6 Der profane Gürtel

Der Fund einer eisernen Riemenzunge könnte auf den ersten Blick überraschen (Abb. 6.2). Ist sie doch Hinweis auf einen profanen Gürtel, wie man ihn im Zusammenhang eines bischöflichen Grab-Ornats eigentlich nicht erwarten würde. Mehrere Parallelfunde von entsprechenden Gürtelschnallen aus Bronze und Eisen in Gräbern des Bremer Doms zeigen jedoch, daß derartige Gürtel im Bereich der erzbischöflichen Untergewänder nicht unbedingt selten waren, in einem Fall (Grab 7) wurde dazu auch ein Messer angetroffen (Brandt 1988, Gräber 7, 18, 20, 37).

Wenden wir uns nun dem Befund zu, der zunächst in besonderem Maße zu Spekulationen Anlaß gegeben hat, der Lederhaut, in der Gottfried begraben wurde.

3.7 Die Lederhülle

Die wegen der schlechten Erhaltungsbedingungen zu großen Teilen nur noch in pulverisiertem Zustand angetroffene Hülle konnte erst durch die Materialanalysen eines Lederspezialisten eindeutig als Leder identifiziert werden (Moog in Vorb.) Es handelt sich um die Haut eines ausgewachsenen männlichen Rindes oder Elchs (Abb. 7). Nachzuweisen war durch die Untersuchung weiterhin die Anwendung eines besonderen Gerbungsverfahrens, mit dem Wasserundurchlässigkeit erreicht wurde, eine Technik, die heute noch beim Juchtenleder üblich ist. Seit Tilmann Schmidts Untersuchung von 1974 wissen wir, daß diese Lederhüllen, die in den letzten Jahrzehnten aus zahlreichen Gräbern bekannt geworden sind, Transportbehälter waren (Schmidt 1974). In den für Verwesungsflüssigkeit undurchlässigen Ledersäcken wurden die Überreste Verstorbener von ihrem Sterbeort über längere Strecken zu ihrer Grablege überführt, oder es wurde mit der Beisetzung in einer solchen Hülle – so z. B. anscheinend der Befund bei der Bestattung Heinrichs des Löwen (Schmidt 1974, 45) – eine später geplante Umbettung vorbereitet.

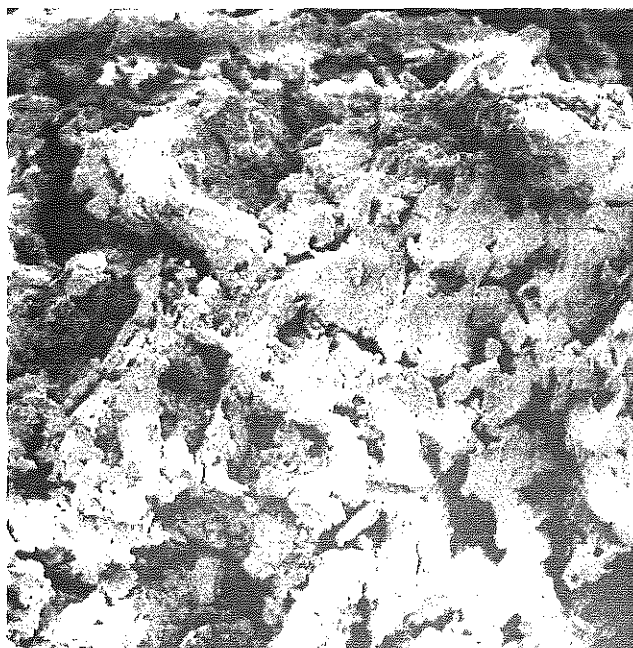


Abb. 7. - Stade, Lederhülle der Bestattung Erzbischof Gottfrieds. Materialprobe in ca. 90facher Vergrößerung unter dem Rasterelektronenmikroskop.

Diese zweite Möglichkeit dürfte auch die zutreffende Interpretation des Stader Falls sein. Gottfried war in Stade gestorben (Bohmbach 1997, 7), so daß für den Weg in die Kirche St. Georg der Transport-sack sicher nicht benötigt wurde. Als Vorbereitung einer vorgesehenen zweiten Beisetzung an einem anderen Ort ist die Lederhülle eher plausibel. Damit stellt sich die Frage, an welchen Ort dabei gedacht worden war. Die Grablege der Grafen von Arnsberg kommt als Möglichkeit nicht in Betracht, da nach dem Verständnis des Mittelalters Geistliche aus dem Familienverband ausgeschieden waren. So bietet sich als naheliegende Lösung wohl nur der Bremer Dom an: Gottfrieds Anhänger planten sehr wahrscheinlich für einen späteren Zeitpunkt seine Überführung in die angestammte Sepulchur der Erzbischöfe in der Bremer Kathedrale.

4 Gesamtbefund und Wertung

Zusammenfassend läßt sich folgendes festhalten. Gottfried ist wahrscheinlich im vollen Bischofsornat begraben worden, mit Bischofsstab und -ring sowie möglicherweise auch mit Kelch und Patene. Bei dem Bischofsstab handelt es sich der allgemeinen Praxis entsprechend um eine eigens für die Bestattung angefertigte Grabinsignie, und diese übliche Form der Ersatzausstattung ist auch für die übrigen Teile des Grabinventars anzunehmen. Abgesehen vom offensichtlichen Fehlen des Palliums, das Gottfried wohl der Vorschrift gemäß zurückgegeben hatte, und ab-

gesehen von der in ihrer Bedeutung im Augenblick nicht sicher einzuschätzenden ungewöhnlichen Lage des Krummstabes ergibt sich der Gesamteindruck, daß der Tote mit dem Grabitus eines Erzbischofs beigesetzt wurde, mit einer Bestattungsform, die ihm auch bei einem Tod als amtierender Erzbischof zuteil geworden wäre.

Dies korrespondiert unmittelbar mit der Grabinschrift, die Gottfried ohne einschränkenden Zusatz als Erzbischof bezeichnet. Verstärkt wird dieser Eindruck durch die exponierte Lage des Grabes: in Stiftergrab-Position unmittelbar vor dem Hauptaltar der größten Stader Kirche, die in manchem das verkleinerte Abbild der Kathedralkirche sein könnte. Vergewärtigt man sich dazu noch den immerwährenden Appell der Grabplatte an die Gläubigen, für das Seelenheil des Erzbischofs zu beten, und ergänzt dies um die Vermutung, daß außerdem die Chorherren von St. Georg durch entsprechende Seelenmeßstiftungen zur Fürbitte für Gottfried verpflichtet waren, erhält man den Eindruck einer äußerst privilegierten Beisetzung mit einer umsichtig geplanten Jenseitsvorsorge.

Zugleich wird jedoch an dem Befund der Lederhülle deutlich, daß diese Stader Grablege nur ein Zwischenaufenthalt sein sollte. Geplant war anscheinend die Umbettung in den Bremer Dom, die höher-rangige Grablege der Erzbischöfe.

Zum Abschluß sollen noch einmal zwei Fragen zum Bestattungsbrauch wiederaufgenommen werden, die bereits im Vorhergehenden mehrfach angesprochen wurden.

5 Diskussionspunkt 1: Gab es eine feste Regel für die bischöfliche und erzbischöfliche Grabausstattung

Ich meine, es ist zumindest zu diskutieren, ob die sich im Bremer Dom wie andernorts abzeichnende Regelmäßigkeiten in der Ausstattung vieler Gräber nicht nur eine Tendenz mit zahlreichen Ausnahmen ist, sondern ein tatsächlich bei so gut wie allen Beisetzungen durchgeführtes Prinzip, das nur durch nachträgliche Störungen für uns verunkelt ist. Dies Prinzip wäre 1.: Vollständigkeit der Ausstattung, a) mit Paramenten, b) mit Stab und Ring, c) mit Kelch und Patene. Die im Grabinventar vieler Beisetzungen angetroffenen Lücken könnten sämtlich auf Grabraub zurückzuführen sein, wie er in Stade in einem detailliert erhobenen Befund nachgewiesen wurde und auch im Bremer Dom in mehreren Fällen vermutet wird (Brandt 1988, Gräber 5, 6, 10, 12). Das Prinzip wäre 2. – sieht man vom erzbischöflichen Pallium und vereinzelt privaten Gegenständen ab –, die

Ausstattung mit Ersatzgegenständen, mit Paramenten, die seit längerem nicht mehr in Gebrauch waren, und mit Insignien, die entweder ebenfalls älter bzw. defekt oder direkt für die Bestattung geschaffene Substitute waren (Stäbe mit Krümmen aus Holz oder minderwertigem Metall, schlichte Ringe aus Goldblech, Kelche und Patenen entweder in Miniaturform aus Silber oder in Normalgröße aus Zinn, Leder, Wachs, Holz). Beim Auftreten anscheinend intakter Originalinsignien müßte wohl verstärkt geprüft werden, ob sich die Deutung als Originalinsignie des Bestatteten wirklich halten läßt.

Die zweite Frage gilt einer etwaigen Sonderform der Bestattung für Kirchenfürsten, die ihr Amt aufgeben oder verloren hatten.

6 Diskussionspunkt II: Gab es eine besondere Bestattungsform für resignierte und abgesetzte Bischöfe und Erzbischöfe?

Gesichertes Erkenntnis ist auf jeden Fall., daß Erzbischöfe nach der Resignation oder Absetzung nicht mit dem Pallium beigesetzt werden durften, das an den Papst zurückzugeben war. Der Stader Grabungsbefund spricht dafür, daß diese Vorschrift auch eingehalten wurde.

Können ähnliche Vorschriften auch für andere Insignien bestanden haben? Es gibt mittelalterliche Berichte, nach denen Bischöfen bei Absetzungen symbolisch Stab und Ring fortgenommen wurde (Salmon 1960, 64). Ist daraus zu schließen, daß diese Würdezeichen – bzw. entsprechende Ersatzinsignien – den Betroffenen auch bei der Beisetzung nicht mitgegeben wurden? Der Stader Befund – hier freilich der Bestattungsbefund nach einer resignatio – spricht nicht dafür. Neben dem Stader Beispiel ist mir bisher nur noch ein weiterer einschlägiger Grabungsbefund bekannt geworden, aus dem der gleiche Schluß gezogen werden könnte. Es handelt sich um die Bestattung des Erzbischofs Heinrich von Mainz, der 1153 nach der Absetzung durch den Papst im Exil in Einbeck starb und in der dortigen St. Alexanderkirche beigesetzt wurde (Hoffmann 1981, 41 ff). Bei einer 1976 durchgeführten Notbergung, die freilich undokumentiert blieb, konnten aus dem Erzbischofsgrab ein Stab und Reste von Paramenten sichergestellt werden. Auf der mitgefundenen Bleitafel wird Heinrich als Erzbischof bezeichnet, ohne Erwähnung der Absetzung, auch hierin eine Parallele zu der Stader Grablege. Auch für diese Frage gilt jedoch, daß für eine gesicherte Beantwortung weitere archäologische Aufschlüsse abzuwarten sind.

7 Schluß

Ziel dieses Berichts über ein einzelnes Grab konnte zunächst nur sein, zum Bild der mittelalterlichen Bischofsbestattungen eine weitere Facette beizutragen. Die bei der vergleichenden Erörterung der Beisetzungen speziell aufgeworfene Frage, ob die Befunde zur bischöflichen Beigabensitte unter dem Aspekt der Regelmäßigkeit nicht vielleicht. T. noch einmal neu zu sichten sind, war an dieser Stelle über den ersten Diskussionsanstoß hinaus noch nicht weiter zu verfolgen.

Literatur

- ANEMÜLLER U. in Vorb.: Mikroanalytische Untersuchungen an der Bischofskrümme des Erzbischofs Gottfried von Bremen, in: Lüdecke 1997, in Vorbereitung.
- ARENS F. 1984: Das Grab des Erzbischofs Heinrich I. von Mainz in Einbeck, *Einbecker Jahrbuch* 35, 58 f.
- BAUERREIß R. 1957: Abtsstab und Bischofsstab, *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des deutschen Benedictinerordens und seiner Zweige* 68, 15-226.
- BINDING G. & UNTERMANN M. 1985: *Kleine Kunstgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Ordensbaukunst in Deutschland*, Darmstadt, 1985.
- BOHMBACH 1982: Das Kloster St. Georg in Stade, in: *Stader Jahrbuch* 1982, 36-55.
- BOHMBACH 1997: Stade und die Erzbischöfe von Bremen, in: *Erzbischof Gottfried von Bremen (†1363) und sein Grab in der Stader St. Georgskirche*, Materialheft zur Ausstellung im Schwedenspeicher-Museum Stade 26.- 31. März 1997.
- BRANDT K.H. 1986: *Ausgrabungen im St. Petri-Dom zu Bremen, Bd. 2: Die Gräber des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, Stuttgart, 1988.
- BRAUN J. 1907: *Die liturgische Gewandung im Orient und Occident*, Freiburg, 1907.
- BRAUN J. 1948a: Artikel Bischof, in: *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, Bd. II, Sp. 774-780.
- BRAUN J. 1948b: Artikel Bischofsring, *ibid.*, Sp. 748-787.
- BRAUN J. 1948c: Artikel Bischofsstab, *ibid.*, Sp. 792-808.
- ELBERN 1963: Der eucharistische Kelch im frühen Mittelalter, *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* XVII, 1-76, 117-188.
- ELMSHÄUSER K. 1995: Die Erzbischöfe als Landesherren, Otto von Oldenburg (1345-1348), Gottfried von Arnsberg (1348-1363), in: H.-E. DAN-

- NENBERG & H.-J. SCHULZE (Hg.), *Geschichte des Landes zwischen Elbe und Weser, Bd. II: Mittelalter*, Stade, 180 f.
- FEHRING G.P. 1979: Missions- und Kirchenwesen in archäologischer Sicht, in: H. JANKUHN & R. WENSKUS (Hg.), *Geschichtswissenschaft und Archäologie*, Vorträge und Forschungen XXII, Sigmaringen, 547-591.
- FEHRING G.P. 1992: Das Grab des Bischofs Heinrich II. von Bocholt (†1343) im Dom zu Lübeck. Überlieferung, Gruft und Gruftinhalt, *Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte* 22, 9-11. (Untersuchungsergebnisse zum Bischofsgrab, a.a.O., 39.)
- FOURLAS A.A. 1971: *Der Ring in der Antike und im Christentum*, Forschungen zur Volkskunde 45, Münster.
- Glossarium artis 2 1982: Comité international d'histoire de l'art (Hg.), *Glossarium artis Bd. 2: Liturgische Geräte, Kreuze und Reliquiare der christlichen Kirchen*, München-New York-London-Paris.
- Glossarium artis 4 1982: Comité international d'histoire de l'art (Hg.), *Glossarium artis Bd. 4: Paramente und Bücher der christlichen Kirchen*, München-New York-London-Paris.
- HERGEMÖLLER 1983: Artikel Bischof, Bischofsamt, VI. Politische und verfassungsgeschichtliche Bedeutung des Bischofs seit dem Wormser Konkordat, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, Bd. II, Sp. 233 f.
- HOFFMANN F. 1981: Grabungsfunde aus dem Gründungsbau der Stiftskirche St. Alexandri in Einbeck (1975), *Einbecker Jahrbuch* 32, 39-52.
- JEZLER P. 1994: *Himmel, Hölle, Fegefeuer - Das Jenseits im Mittelalter*, Ausstellungskatalog München².
- ILLI M. 1994: Begräbnis, Verdammung und Erlösung. Das Fegefeuer im Spiegel von Bestattungsriten, in: Jezler 1994, 59-68.
- KLAUSER Th. 1948: *Der Ursprung der bischöflichen Insignien und Ehrenrechte*, Krefeld².
- Lappenberg J.M. (Hg.) 1841: *Geschichtsquellen des Erzstiftes und der Stadt Bremen*, Bremen.
- LÜDECKE T. 1994: Erzbischofsgrab in der Stader St. Georgskirche freigelegt, *Archäologie in Deutschland* (1994) 4, 44 f.
- LÜDECKE T. 1996: St. Georg in Stade – erste archäologische Ergebnisse zur Kirche und zur Grablege des Bremer Erzbischofs Gottfried, in: *Premontre des Ostens – Das Kloster Unser lieben Frauen Magdeburg vom 11. bis 17. Jahrhundert*, Ausstellungskatalog Magdeburg, 47 f.
- LÜDECKE T. (Hg.) 1997: *Die Grablege des Bremer Erzbischofs Gottfried in der Stader St. Georgskirche* (Arbeitstitel), in Vorbereitung.
- MEIER M. in Vorb.: Die Bestimmung zweier Holzproben aus der Bestattung des Erzbischofs, in: Lüdecke 1997.
- MOOG G. in Vorb.: Materialanalyse der Lederhülle im Grab des Erzbischofs Gottfried (Arbeitstitel), in: Lüdecke 1997.
- MÜLLER U. 1992: Das Grab des Bischofs Heinrich II. von Bocholt (†1343) im Dom zu Lübeck. Pilgerstab, Holzsarg und Kleinfunde, *Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte* 22, 1992, 33-38.
- PRECHEL M. in Vorb.: Die Skelettreste des Erzbischofs (Arbeitstitel), in: Lüdecke 1997.
- REINLE A. 1988: *Die Ausstattung deutscher Kirchen im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt.
- RUß S. in Vorb.: Textilfragmente unter Krümme des Bischofsstabes, in: Lüdecke 1997.
- SALMON P. 1960: *Mitra und Stab, Die Pontificalinsignien im römischen Ritus*, Mainz (Franzö. Ausgabe: *Études sur les insignes du pontife dans le rite romain*, Rome, 1955).
- SCHMIDT T. 1974: Die Grablege Heinrichs des Löwen im Dom zu Braunschweig, *Braunschweigisches Jahrbuch* 55, 9-45.
- SCHÖNECKE W. 1915: *Personal- und Amtsdaten der Erzbischöfe von Hamburg-Bremen vom Jahre 831 bis 1511*, Dissertation Greifswald.
- WESTERMANN-ANGERHAUSEN H. 1992: Das Grab des Bischofs Heinrich II. von Bocholt (†1343) im Dom zu Lübeck. Ein goldener Bischofsring, *Lübecker Schriften für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte* 22, 9-11.
- ZOEPLF 1948: Artikel Bestattung, in: *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, Bd. II, Sp. 332-353.

Abbildungsnachweis:

Abb. 1-6: Stadtarchäologie Stade; Zeichnungen J. Matus M. A.
Abb. 7: Foto Gerhard Moog, Westdeutsche Gerberschul Reutlingen, und Bayerisches Landesdenkmalamt.

Torsten Lüdecke
Stadtarchäologie Stade
Rathaus
21682 Stade
Deutschland

Eugenijus Ivanauskas

Dead Man's Money in Lithuania

Using coins in the burial ritual is a very old and wide-spread phenomenon in Lithuanian civilization as well as in the whole of Europe. The strength of its roots in European consciousness and culture is demonstrated by the following example. At first, the Christian Church considered the phenomenon to be a pagan vestige and fought against it. However, at the end of the Middle Ages the Church started to tolerate the custom and even to use it as part of its own rituals. Thus, for instance, in 1689 12 golden and silver coins were deposited in the grave of pope Innocentius XI, symbolizing the 12 years of his pontificating.¹

In the territory of Lithuania, the practice of putting coins in the graves started at the time when Roman Empire existed. In Viking times and later, Arabian and German coins, silver bars and/or pieces of hack silver pieces used to be deposited in the graves. But at that time, the practice of putting money in the graves together with the dead was rare. It became more common again only after the rechristening of Lithuania in 1387, when minor local coins appeared and people started burying their dead instead of cremating them. A wealth of finds provides us with the opportunity to follow the peculiar development of the custom from the end of the 14th century up till the fourth quarter of the 18th century.

Approximately 7000 graves attributed to the 14th to 19th century in 200 graveyards have been investigated by archaeologists of the 19th and 20th centuries.² More than 3000 coins have been found in approximately 1300 graves. About half of the investigated graves did not yield any no cerements.³ The number of graves with coin finds vary from 50 to several percent. Coin finds are rather rare in the graves of the major towns, while they are quite common in boroughs. Examples of graves with coins are generally more common in the villages. The absence of coins in burials in the larger towns can

very probably be explained by the fact that these towns were inhabited mostly by foreigners who did not practice the custom of depositing coins in the graves. But there may have been an additional reason, namely that the citizens of local origin were imbued by Christianity and led a Christian way of life. The control exercised by the Church was not of the least importance. The same reasons may account for the above-mentioned burial practice in boroughs. However, in boroughs it ceased earlier than in villages.

Coin finds are very frequent in the greater part of the village burials up to the plague of 1657-1658. The data supports the idea that depositing coins occurred rather frequently in times of war and epidemics when prices for goods and services rose and small coins lost their value. Even forgeries and non-valuable coins are not rare in the graves of those periods. In the larger part of Lithuania, the practice of putting coins in graves stopped after the Great Plague though some conservative rural communities or those less troubled by plague and wars still practised the custom of burying coins together with the dead up till the fourth quarter of the 18th century. In later graves, only coins accidentally forgotten in the clothes of the dead are found.

Depositing coins in graves can be looked upon as a specific monetary bargain where the party involved could fully express his or hers consumer outlook. The relatives had to decide what coins and how many – if any – should be deposited in the grave. As we can see, about half of the relatives decided not to give any money to the deceased and one quarter deposited a single coin while the remaining quarter deposited more than one coin in the grave. Still, putting two or three coins in the grave prevailed even in the latter case. Putting coins into the graves was avoided. It is interesting to note that in some localities coins occur

¹ R. KIERSNOWSKI, *Moneta w kulturze wiekow srednich*, Warszawa, 1988, 59.

² E. IVANAUSKAS, *Coins and counters in the graveyards of*

Lithuania 1387-1850, Vilnius, 1997.

³ E. SVETIKAS, *Monetos XIV-XVII a. Lietuvos kapinyuose, Lietuvos archeologija* 11, Vilnius, 1995, 119.

more frequently in female graves than in male ones. The same is valid also in the case of babies' graves which yielded more coins than burials belonging to children and teenagers. Most probably the differences were predetermined by the social position of the dead, the sentiments involved and the fact that the wealth of the family was in the hands of the men.

While describing Lithuanian customs, M. Strijkovskij (1547- after 1586) hinted at the towel which was usually put on the dead man's neck and in which were wrapped some coins for the dead man's food.⁴ Whatever form the practice may have taken, the picture is partially true. Coins used to be deposited not only with dead men but also with women and children. They were also deposited in varying places: over the dead man's head, on the chest, on the waist, at the feet. At first, the tradition of putting coins in the

purse at the waist predominated. From M. Strijkovskij's times onwards, the practice of placing the coins over the dead people's head gradually took over.⁵ Most relatives either did not have the possibility or did not see any need to deposit coins in the grave. Only some of them invested a minimal amount: one single coin of the lowest value. Such a sum was sufficient only to buy a symbolic amount of food. This why we assume the coins to be not actual money for food but rather the symbolic equivalent representing the goods found in a consumers' society.

A better acquaintance with the custom of depositing coins in the graves together with the dead is of major importance to the investigation and understanding of the religious and everyday life outlooks and perceptions of early Christian Lithuanian society.

⁴ *Krađtas ir įmonės*, Vilnius 1983, 71.

⁵ E. SVETIKAS, *Monetos XIV-XVII a. Lietuvos kapinyuose, Lietuvos archeologija* 11, Vilnius 1995, 134.

Eugenijus Ivanauskas
V. Kreves 31-73
3042 Kaunas
Lithuania

Christiane Prigent

L'empreinte de la mort sur le paysage paroissial en Bretagne aux XVe et XVIe siècles

Tenant une place privilégiée dans la mentalité des Bretons du Moyen Âge,¹ la mort ne pouvait manquer d'apposer son empreinte sur le paysage paroissial. Une géographie de l'Au-delà structure l'espace de leur vie quotidienne: cimetière, arcs de triomphe et ossuaires – éléments constitutifs de l'enclos paroissial – en constituent les signes tangibles.

On pénètre dans le cimetière qui jouxte l'église par une porte monumentale, parfois surmontée d'un arc de triomphe sous lequel le défunt passait une dernière fois avant d'entrer dans la maison de Dieu. Cette porte monumentale comporte habituellement trois entrées: l'entrée principale flanquée de deux entrées secondaires, murées sur une certaine hauteur par des échaliers – pierres verticales posées sur la champ afin d'interdire le cimetière aux animaux. L'arc de triomphe de Saint-Jean-du-Doigt, le plus ancien, ne remonte pas au-delà du XVe siècle. Ici, le mur d'enceinte s'ouvre par la béance d'un arc amorti d'une accolade entre deux piliers massifs. Sur la gauche subsiste l'échelier traditionnel avec sa dalle de pierre. A La Martyre (début du XVIe siècle), au-dessus de l'arc a été aménagée une galerie de style flamboyant, elle-même surmontée par un calvaire. Cette galerie, à laquelle on accède par des escaliers latéraux, était utilisée pour prêcher lors des foires annuelles et des pèlerinages. L'ensemble architectural se compare à un immense jubé enrichi d'un programme iconographique didactique: sur les piliers de l'entrée sont sculptés, à gauche, l'ange Gabriel et, à droite, la Vierge de l'Annonciation; au-dessus se dresse une croix dont le fût porte dans son soubassement un groupe de Pitié et au sommet le Crucifié adossé au Christ du Jugement dernier.

La coutume d'inhumer les morts à l'intérieur des édifices religieux a entraîné la construction, dans les

cimetières, d'ossuaires – édifices destinés à renfermer les ossements que l'on exhumait pour aménager de nouvelles sépultures.² C'est la définition qu'en donne l'inscription de l'ossuaire de Pencran:

CHAPELLE SAINT-EUTROPE ET CHARNIER
POUR METTRE LES OSSEMENTS DU PEUPLE.
1594.

En fait, l'ossuaire, local de service prévu pour répondre à un souci de décence, ne fut nullement le monopole de la Bretagne. L'originalité de celle-ci réside dans les formes variées de ces architectures, nombreuses dans la partie occidentale.³ Les plus anciens ossuaires (XVe siècle) sont situés dans un angle du porche sud de l'église (Saint-Herbot, Guimiliau) ou incorporés dans son angle sud-ouest (Ergué-Armel, Le Saint). Ces édifices dont l'accès se fait par l'intérieur de l'édifice religieux s'ouvrent sur l'extérieur par des arcades sur lesquelles repose la toiture, souvent très basse. Postérieurement furent bâtis des monuments indépendants, qui prennent appui contre le mur sud-ouest du cimetière (Kergrist-Moëlou, Saint-Yvi, Saint-Fiacre). De plan rectangulaire, l'ossuaire de Lanvellec est ajouré, dans sa façade méridionale, de sept arcades en arc brisé, séparées les unes des autres par des colonnettes jumelées, et percé dans son pignon occidental d'une porte décorée d'accolades à crochets.

Une décoration macabre et diverses inscriptions indiquent la destination funéraire des ossuaires. Têtes de morts et tibias entrecroisés en sont les motifs les plus fréquents (Loqueffret, Lannédern, Brasparts). A Saint-Hernin, la niche au-dessus de la porte d'entrée est occupée par une Vierge de Pitié. En latin, en breton ou en français, les inscriptions relevées évoquent la mort (BONNES GENS QUI PAR ILLECQUES PASSEZ, PRIEZ POUR LES TREPASSES (Trémaouézan,

¹ C. PRIGENT, *Pouvoir ducal, religion et production artistique en Basse-Bretagne 1350-1575*, Paris, Maisonneuve et Larose, 1992, 320 et sq.

² Les tombes étaient régulièrement vidées: environ tous les trente ans à Saint-Thégonnec où l'on payait quelqu'un "pour avoir remué les ossements du charnier" (R. BARRIE, *Les enclos*

paroissiaux, in: *Les Monuments historiques de la France*, n° 109, 1980, p. 55-60.

³ A. CROIX, *Les ossuaires*, in: *Les Bretons et Dieu. Atlas d'histoire religieuse 1300-1800*, Rennes, Presses universitaires, 1985, n° 12.

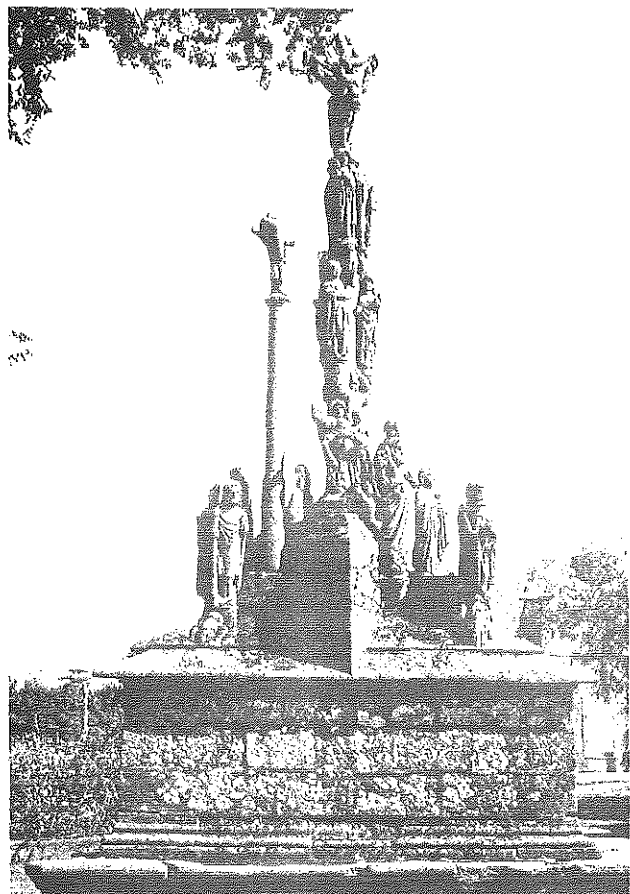
Fig. 1. - Lannédern: enclos paroissial regroupant l'église, le calvaire et l'ossuaire.



cathédrale de Quimper): *RESPICE FINEM* (Guengat, 1554), le Jugement dernier et l'Enfer.

Arcs de triomphe, ossuaire et calvaire regroupés autour de l'église forment l'enclos paroissial (fig. 1). A Notre-Dame de Châteaulin on y pénètre par une

Fig. 2. - Landrévarzec: chapelle Notre-Dame de Quilinen; calvaire circa 1550.



porte monumentale du XVe siècle. Au centre est construite l'église qui comporte dans sa façade sud vers l'ouest sept ouvertures, aujourd'hui murées – souvenir de l'ancien ossuaire; et au sud-est s'élève le calvaire. A La Martyre, les divers éléments sont reserrés; l'entrée associe l'arc de triomphe et le calvaire. Cette disposition est reprise à La Roche-Maurice où l'on observe une combinaison entre les croix et les piliers du passage.

Le calvaire constitue l'élément essentiel de l'enclos; il est habituellement situé au sud-est de l'église alors que l'ossuaire se trouve à l'ouest. Propre à la Basse-Bretagne – la partie occidentale de la province –, le calvaire évolue depuis la simple croix jusqu'aux ensembles historiés de la vallée de l'Elorn, aux environs de Landerneau.⁴ Dans les croix les plus rudimentaires, à un seul croisillon, les figures se détachent en haut-relief d'un unique bloc de pierre. Les six personnages se regroupent sur la même traverse à Saint-Hernin (XVIe siècle). Dans la région de Vannes, le fût se termine par un médaillon quadrilobé (Pleucadeuc, Saint-Avé) ou pentagonal abrité sous un auvent. Dans toutes ces œuvres se remarquent les mêmes constantes iconographiques: orientée vers l'ouest, la Crucifixion s'orne, sur son revers, d'une Vierge à l'Enfant (encadrée de deux anges à la chapelle du Loc en Saint-Avé). C'est dans les bas-reliefs

⁴ J. STANY-GAUTHIER, *Croix et calvaires bretons*, Paris, Plon, 1944; Y. P. CASTEL, *Croix et calvaires du Finistère*, Quimper, Société archéologique du Finistère, 1980; V. H. DEBIDOUR, *Grands calvaires de Bretagne*, Châteaulin, éd. Jos Le Doaré, 1984.

du socle que se concentre l'ornementation (Noyal-Muzillac, Caden). Dans quelques calvaires autour de Quimper (Quilinen en Saint-Evarzec (fig. 2), Saint-Vénec en Briec, Nizon...), les diverses composantes se combinent en un élan vertical qui culmine avec la Crucifixion. Les personnages s'étagent sur des consoles qui bourgeonnent le long de la colonne. Aux angles est et sud du soubassement triangulaire s'élèvent les croix des larrons, tandis que les apôtres se répartissent sur les trois côtés. Ce schéma en hauteur les apparente à un immense Arbre de Jessé.

Les calvaires les plus importants comportent un deuxième croisillon. Leur agencement prend alors la forme d'un rectangle, toujours placé au faite d'un fût unique (Sainte-Marie du Ménéz Hom (1544), Lopérec (1557), Pencran, Plounéventer...). A Lœmélar, la traverse supérieure supporte le Crucifié entre les larrons; sur la traverse inférieure la Vierge et saint Jean, respectivement adossés à la Madeleine et à saint Pierre, encadrent une Vierge de Pitié. Pour aérer la composition, les croix des larrons sont fréquemment rejetées sur les côtés et prennent appui sur des socles distincts (Laz (1563), Gurunhuel).

Progressivement l'évolution s'est faite vers un schéma horizontal qui permet la concentration de nombreux personnages (cent quatre-vingts à Guimiliau). Le récit s'y lit comme dans une bande dessinée, et les scènes se juxtaposent sur plusieurs registres. On y perçoit cependant la volonté de rassembler autour du mystère central la foule qui s'agite au pied de la croix du Christ (Tronoën en Saint-Jean-Trolimon, Kerbreuder en Saint-Hernin, Pleyben, Guéhenno).

Les programmes iconographiques varient d'un monument à l'autre. Dans les plus grands calvaires (Tronoën, Plougouven, Pleyben...), un cycle marial est associé au cycle de la Passion. La Crucifixion constitue la séquence principale de la plus simple des croix au calvaire le plus élaboré. Le Crucifié est présenté seul ou encadré de saint Jean et de la Vierge. Vierge de douleur, elle est aussi la Vierge de Pitié abîmée dans la contemplation de son Fils mort (sculptée en ronde-bosse contre la colonne centrale à Plusquellec, La Feuillée, Le Faou). A Tronoën, deux anges soulèvent les pans de son voile pour lui permettre de regarder le corps de Jésus allongé sur ses genoux. Dans le cimetière de Brasparts subsiste l'une des plus fascinantes représentations. Aidée par deux saintes femmes, Marie soutient le corps du Christ ployé en arc de cercle: le hiératisme naît ici de la *rigor mortis*. A Laz (1527), l'emploi d'un unique bloc de pierre pour le cadavre pourrait apparenter l'oeuvre aux pierres tombales. Derrière Jésus, se tiennent à genoux saint Jean, la Vierge et la Madeleine, compagnons silencieux du drame. Le sculpteur a opposé

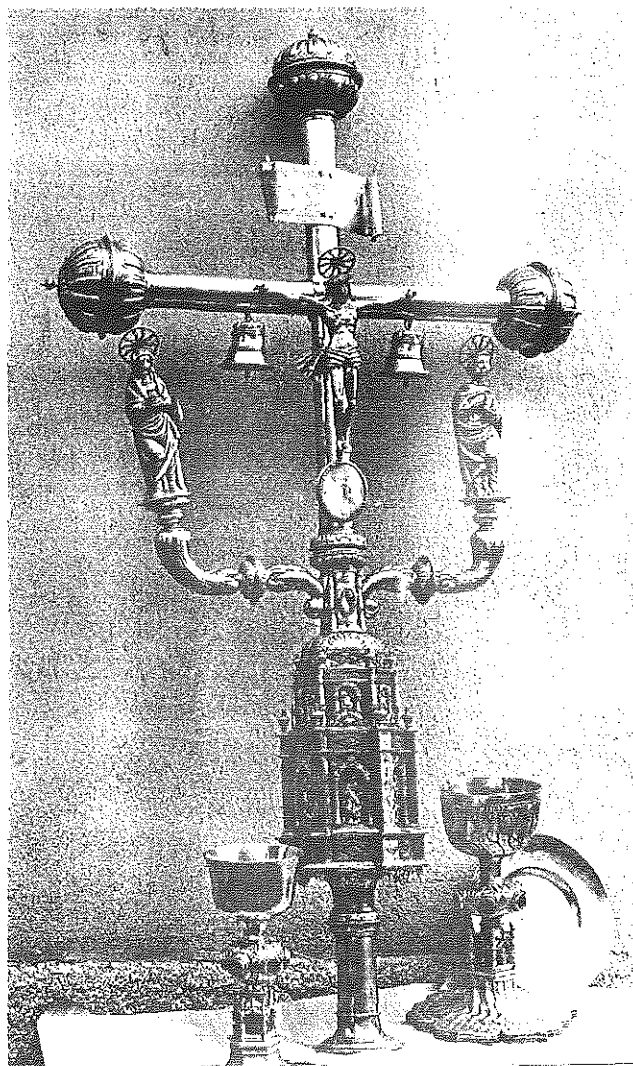


Fig. 3. - Guengat: église paroissiale: trésor: croix processionnelle (1574).

la retenue et la dignité de ses personnages à la gestulation expressive de tradition flamande, pourtant si adaptée à ces sujets dramatiques.

La Vierge est aussi l'un des acteurs de la Mise au tombeau, épisode majeur de ces Passions en pierre. Tournée vers l'est, cet épisode est généralement adossé à la Résurrection située à l'ouest comme le Crucifié.

Magnifiée par le calvaire et considérée, à juste titre, comme une image symbolique de la dévotion bretonne, la Crucifixion se retrouve à l'intérieur des édifices. A la chapelle du Loc en Saint-Avé, un calvaire de bois, comparable aux oeuvres taillées dans la pierre, souligne la séparation du transept et de la nef. Au revers du Christ, abrité sous un dais d'une exubérance toute flamboyante se tient le saint protecteur de la chapelle, au-dessous d'une inscription en lettres gothiques avec le nom du donateur et la date de 1500. C'est un exemple unique, qu'il ne faut pas confondre avec une poutre de gloire. Barrant transversalement

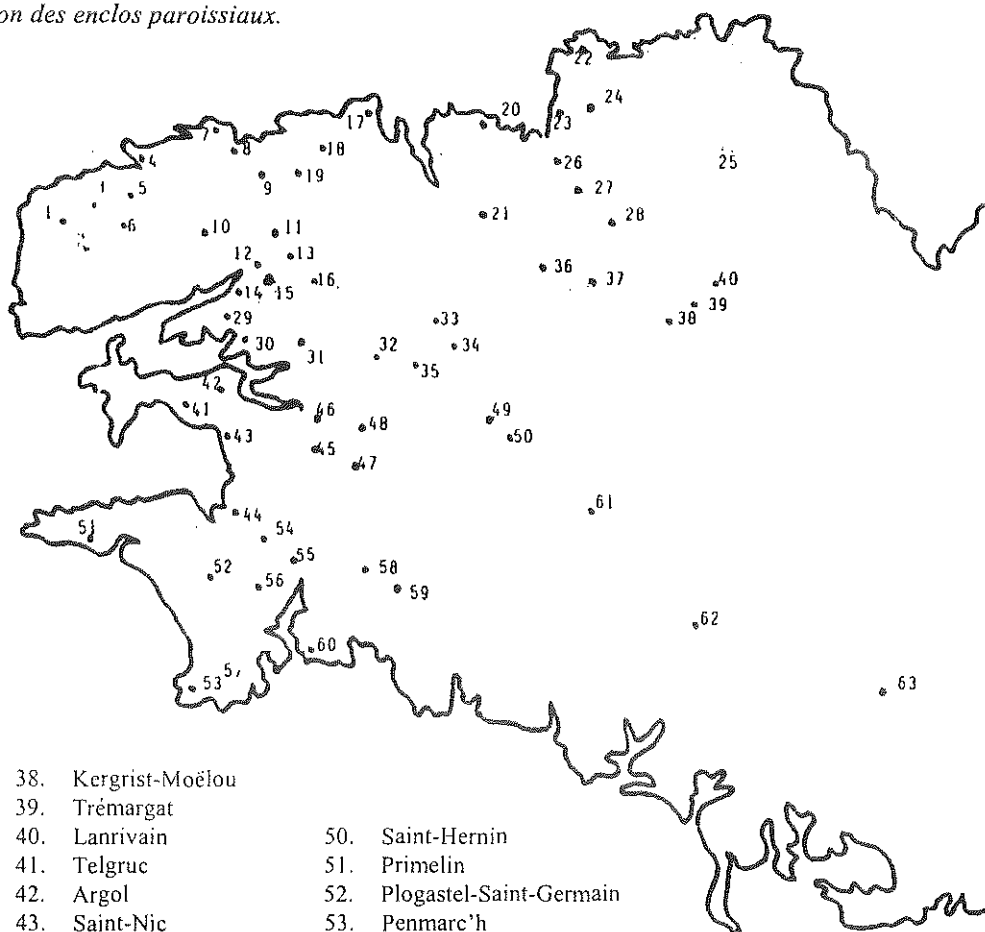
Fig. 4. - Carte de localisation des enclos paroissiaux.

1. Lanrivouré
2. Milizac
3. Bourg Blanc
4. Guissény
5. Plouvien
6. Plabennec
7. Plounéour Trez
8. Goulven
9. Lanhouarneau
10. Trémouezan
11. Saint-Servais
12. La roche derrien
13. Ploudiry
14. Pencran
15. La Martyre
16. Locmélard
17. Roscoff
18. Plougoulm
19. Berven
20. Saint-Jean-du-Doigt
21. Plougouven
22. Trégastel
23. Locquemeau
24. Loguivy-Lannion
25. Runan
26. Plouzelambre
27. Lanvellec
28. Loc Envel
29. Dirinon
30. Daoulas
31. Rumengol
32. Brasparts
33. Brennilis
34. Saint-Herbot
35. Lannédern
36. Ploura'h
37. Plusquellec

38. Kergrist-Moëlou
39. Trémargat
40. Lanrivain
41. Telgruc
42. Argol
43. Saint-Nic
44. Kerlaz
45. Saint-Coulitz
46. Saint-Ségal
47. Gouézec
48. Pleyben
49. Clédén-Poher

50. Saint-Hernin
51. Primelin
52. Plogastel-Saint-Germain
53. Penmarc'h
54. Guengat
55. Plonéis
56. Pluguffan
57. Tréminou
58. Ergué-Gabéric
59. Saint-Yvi

60. Bénodet
61. Trégornan
62. Lochrist
63. Guéhenno



la nef à l'entrée du chœur, cette dernière subsiste dans les chapelles Sainte-Brigitte en Motreff et Saint-Maudez en Plouyé. Par sa richesse iconographique, la poutre de l'église de Lampaul-Guimiliau peut soutenir la comparaison avec un calvaire. Sous les verticales d'un Christ de grande taille et des deux protagonistes privilégiés du drame, s'étend une longue frise historiée, consacrée vers l'ouest à la Passion. Dans la chapelle Saint-Herbot en Plonévez-du-Faou et dans l'église de La Roche-Maurice, la Crucifixion couronne le jubé. Orientée vers les fidèles, la Crucifixion de la poutre de gloire ou du jubé sert de prélude au drame liturgique qui se renouvelle sur le maître-autel, et déjà illustrée sur le vitrail qui le surplombe. Apparues circa 1535 dans le Léon (nord-ouest de la Bretagne), des verrières retiennent l'attention par l'importance accordée à cette séquence (Saint-Matthieu de Quimper circa 1540, Gouézec, Pleyben, Tourc'h (1550), Plogonnec...). Dans l'église de La Roche-Maurice, la maîtresse-vitre (1539) est divisée en six lancettes et trente panneaux: les divers épisodes de la Passion s'agencent autour de la Crucifi-

xion. On y retrouve l'animation des grands calvaires paroissiaux.

La formule du calvaire s'est même annexé les croix processionnelles. Toutes semblables, elles montrent le Christ cloué au centre d'une croix dont les bras garnis de clochettes sont terminés par de grosses boules; la Vierge et saint Jean sont placés sur une traverse secondaire faite de deux branches contrecourbées. S'inspirant du soubassement d'un calvaire monumental, le noeud hexagonal abrite, dans des niches en plein cintre, les statuettes des apôtres (Pleyben, Plouénan, Guengat, Cast... datant du troisième quart du XVI^e siècle mais encore de style gothique).

Christiane Prigent
Université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne
U.F.R. d'Histoire de l'Art et Archéologie
3, rue Michelet
75006 Paris France

Post-medieval mortuary practices in Antwerp (Belgium)

Introduction

In the recent past, the Excavations Department of the City of Antwerp has had the opportunity to carry out archaeological research in two churches, the Cathedral of Our Lady and the St. Paul's Church. In both cases, the operations consisted of rescue excavations during the construction of a heating and air-conditioning system. In the Cathedral of Our Lady a generous period of time was provided with an intermediate stage included in the construction work between 1987 and 1990. In the St. Paul's Church, the situation was more difficult; nevertheless, the construction works allowed for sufficient time for archaeological research, which occurred mainly in 1995 and 1996.

It should be emphasized that both churches have a completely different background. Between the 12th and the end of the 14th century the Church of Our Lady – which became a cathedral only in 1559 – was the only parish church of Antwerp and even after that date it retained a crucial function among parish churches. St. Paul's – the history of which goes back to the mid-13th century – was originally the monastery church of the Dominican monastery and became a parish church only in the 19th century.

In both cases, the archaeological fieldwork paid considerable attention to the burials underneath the church floor. This led to a massive amount of information about how our ancestors regarded death. To some extent, the results of the fieldwork in both churches were similar and sometimes even complementary. Although information concerning the Middle Ages was also recorded, the present paper is concerned mainly with the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The year 1784 can be considered a final date. It was in that year that an edict of the Austrian emperor Joseph II came into effect in this region, prohibiting the continuation of the practice of burying the dead in the church.

Layout of the burial ground within the church

The gravedigger played a crucial role in the layout of the burial ground within the church. It was his responsibility to use the available space as efficiently as possible. The excavations showed a well thought-out plan to be behind this. First of all, the coffins were buried in parallel rows on top of, next to and behind each other so that it was almost possible to predict where approximately each of the burials would be. Secondly, it became clear that once it had been decided to bury someone in a particular place, that was what would eventually happen, whatever difficulties were encountered. Any possible obstacles were removed without mercy. These obstacles could take the form of previous burials, the corpses sometimes still being in a state of decomposition; the obstacles could also take the form of structures such as walls or former vaults. In fact, in the cathedral the burial pits were the main agents of the destruction of the architectural remains of the predecessors of the present building.

We know from historical sources that in certain periods demand exceeded supply with regard to available space within the church so that semi-decomposed bodies had to be pushed to one side to make way for new burials. It is obvious that this led to extremely unhygienic conditions. It even had detrimental effects on the frequency of church visits. And since that, in turn, had financial consequences the church tried to do something about it.

Buried in coffins

As a rule all believers had the right to be buried in a wooden coffin. The practice was waived only in exceptional circumstances. Thus for instance, historical information tells us that sometimes the dead were rolled in a rush mat and placed in the burial pit. This occurred only on rare occasions such as a crisis situation or if for some reason an ordinary coffin was not available. However, this practice has not been

established archaeologically. We obtained the most important information about the coffins from the excavations in St. Paul's Church. Particularly in the cathedral, the wood had decayed completely in most cases, being revealed only as a dark trace in the ground. The exceptional state of preservation of the organic materials in some vaults in the St. Paul's Church provided unique material enabling us to reconstruct the coffins.

Obviously, the coffins were made to measure. Standard sizes are not found. The coffins which could be measured were probably recent examples, from the 18th century. Each one is a box with a slightly trapezoid bottom, sides which stick out slightly, a protruding head- and foot-end and a roof-shaped lid. Each one represents an example of real craftsmanship. Normally all coffins are made from oak. The planks are joined with iron nails while the lid is sometimes fastened down with large decorative screws. To seal the coffin hermetically the seams were coated with a tar-like substance. Coffins of priests had an odd feature: a small door in the lid. During the funeral a miniature chalice and paten were placed in the coffin as part of a special ceremony. Remains of these objects were not found (but this is probably due to the material which they were made of and which did not survive). A number of examples of these small doors were found, the evidence taking the form either of hinges which allowed the door to be opened and closed or of the doors themselves in the case of very well preserved examples from St. Paul's Church.

With regard to the coffins, only one deviating example was found in the Cathedral of Our Lady and it is a burial also deviated from the norm in other ways. Someone had been buried in front of the entrance to the presbytery in a very heavy oak coffin made from planks 6 to 8 cm thick. And there was a lead sarcophagus in the coffin. In spite of the rather unique nature of this burial the body in question could not be identified.

Tombs and vaults

A minority of believers were buried in a brick tomb. This was already the case in the late Middle Ages. During this period tombs were used with a plastered and decorated inside. In Antwerp this decoration was limited to cross designs in red paint. Probably from the 16th century onwards a new type of burial chamber became prominent: communal or family vaults intended for repeated use (in contrast to the tombs which intended for one single use only). This kind of vaults also continued to be used in the 17th and 18th centuries. These communal vaults are

oblong brick cellars with barrel vault, the size of which could vary. Generally, they are about 3 m long and 2 m wide. The height can also vary considerably. In most cases they are accessible via a very steep staircase built into the front part of the vault and above which a covering slab closed the opening to the vault. The floor can be made of tamped earth or mortar but floors finished with bricks or tiles also occur. In most cases, a construction – usually a set of metal rods – just above the floor of the vault allowed for the support of the coffins. In other cases bricks placed on their side or even wooden beams were used.

It is difficult to establish the number of people who could be buried in such a vault over the years. Archaeological information seems to suggest that the vaults were used for a very long time and that at certain times, they were probably emptied. The family vaults in the cathedral were all disturbed but in the St. Paul's church a number of examples had been preserved in the same condition as when the last interment occurred. In some cases more than 20 coffins were stacked on top of and next to each other. How much time it took to arrive at such a number of interments cannot be established but everything seems to suggest that the burials took place in a relatively short period of time. The contents of the most intact vaults in St. Paul's give the impression that the interments all date from the last decade before burials in churches were prohibited. All older interments had already been removed.

In the absence of historical research no details are known about the building, the costs or the owners of the various vaults. In one case in St. Paul's there seemed to be a plan behind the construction of a number of vaults. A whole battery of vaults of them was located in front of the entrance to the presbytery. They were organized in two rows one behind the other, each row numbering six vaults placed side by side. Possibly the church regarded this as an investment. The construction of vaults meant that money could be saved on materials to raise the floor-level and later on additional money could be made from the vaults themselves. Both in the St. Paul's church and in the cathedral the vaults appeared to be distributed at random throughout the church without any discernible reason for this.

In the presbytery of the Cathedral of Our Lady a rather unique, very large communal vault was found, the opening of which was decorated with a magnificent covering slab. The underground space measured approximately 6 m by 4 and it was possible to establish from historical sources that this vault was built in 1751. The reason for its construction was not given but it was probably a vault for the cannons of the cathedral chapter.

A last element in the disposal of the dead are the ossuaries. In some vault areas underneath the annexes of the cathedral, a number of specific charnel deposits occurred in which the bones of cleared graves had been placed. In St. Paul's, no ossuary in the traditional sense is known but a different phenomenon occurred here. When the 19th-century church floor was laid out, the burial ground within the church was cleared. A solution had to be found for the large quantities of bones recovered. As a result, almost all available vaults in the church and in the monastery complex were filled up with bones and in addition, a gigantic charnel approximately 6 m by 7 built underground next to the church was used. Thousands of bones and pieces of coffins were dumped in here. It is not clear whether this space was intentionally designed as a charnel but this would seem highly probable.

Identification of the dead

It is important for us to realise that our ancestors did not necessarily desire that there be a material link between the place in the church where they were buried and the place where their tombstone or memorial stone was located. The absence of this material link makes it impossible to identify the dead. This is unlike the situation in many Dutch churches, for example, where the tombstone says who lies buried underneath. An extra difficulty is that we are unable to establish who was buried in a vault and who was not, with everything this may mean in terms of social differentiation.

From the more than one thousand burials which were examined during both excavations we succeeded in identifying only one skeleton and then only for the obvious reason that the person in question was buried with his stamp. It was Aubertus Mireaus, deacon of the Antwerp cathedral, who died in 1640.

The dress of the dead

When it comes to how the dead were dressed, there was a clear difference between laymen and clergy. Laymen were buried in a shroud or winding sheet. After being in the ground for some time almost nothing remained of this linen garment. Only in a few rare cases, it was possible to document small fragments. The most important remains of these shrouds are the pins found with the skeletons: they are dressmaker's pins with which the shrouds were probably draped round the body. Other elements of the dress are extremely rare. Very occasionally a hair ribbon may

be found but apart from that sober dressing of the dead was strictly imposed. In this respect mortuary practices did not differentiate according to sex or age: in death everyone was equal.

Only one group is different from the rest. When carrying out research in the cathedral we had already noticed that certain skeletons were found with traces of green oxidation and pieces of metal round the skull. When an intact vault was opened we found an obvious explanation for this. In it was a body with on its head a crown made from flowers and leaves mounted on a metal frame. Such crowns seemed to occur quite frequently and were also found in St. Paul's. They could be made with all kinds of materials such as fabric, paper, metal or glass. We know from folklore that in this region the custom lived on right into the 20th century. Historical information helps us to formulate a hypothesis to explain the use of these crowns. So-called 'white bodies' (*witte lijken*) had the right to be adorned with such a crown. The adjective 'white' should be interpreted here as pure or innocent, so that an explanation is immediately at hand: everyone who died unmarried and therefore as a virgin, either children or adults, regardless of age or sex, had the right to be buried wearing such a crown.

Unlike laymen, priests were buried in their official robes. This means in a chasuble with a stola round their neck and with a maniple round their arm. Given the nature of the material used, these garments were better preserved in the ground than the shrouds of laymen. Still, it was possible to collect important remains of fabric, whether the dead had been buried in the ground or in the vaults in St. Paul's where the coffins had not been covered with earth. The state of preservation of the fabric varied considerably. In some cases it was sufficiently stiff so as to allow us to recover the items of clothing in one piece. In other cases only small fragments had been preserved. In the case of priests, other items of clothing were found in addition to the various parts of the official robe. Priests were mostly buried with their shoes on and also wearing stockings. In a few cases head gear was also found and in rare cases they even wore gloves. One thing is noticeable with regard to these clothing items: the clothes are usually worn-out and too threadbare to be of any further use. Inherent to these worn-out clothes is that the fabrics in question cannot be used to date the dead. Before ending up in a burial a chasuble was used for generations.

The body in the coffin

The way in which the body was placed in the coffin was also determined by a number of traditions. Clues

about this were found during the investigation in the Cathedral of Our Lady but the clearest examples come from the St. Paul's church.

A pack of straw was found in a number of coffins. This straw was either used as a pillow beneath the head or spread out over the entire surface of the coffin. In one case, other plants had clearly had been used and spread out over the bottom of the coffin. Furthermore, a layer of charcoal and ash was also found in the coffin. Both traditions have their origins or explanation in early church history. Innocentius I, pope from 401 to 417, dictated that the sick be subjected to a strict penance ceremony before receiving last rites. They had to be removed from their bed and placed on a bed of ash and straw as a sign of humility and penance. This tradition continued for centuries until at some time it was adapted to the custom of placing ash and straw in the coffin. This custom was used both for laymen and clergy.

In the case of a number of burials in the cathedral pieces of mica or slivers of metal were found scattered in the coffin. Possibly other materials, which did not survive, had also been buried with the dead, among them flowers or herbs for instance. This material was scattered on top of the body. In some cases even shapes were cut out in mica. To us this may seem a rather vulgar custom but obviously the practice was quite common to our ancestors.

Funerary offerings

When examining a Christian necropolis one does not expect to find many or even any funerary offerings. The church insisted that everyone left the world as he entered it, *i.e.* without earthly goods. Yet the archaeological fieldwork yielded a comparatively high number of objects which had been buried with the dead. Some of these objects are clearly religious in nature, but others obviously are not.

The religious objects can be explained within the framework of official church teachings. This applies first and foremost to a number of examples of wooden crucifixes, to which a metal figure of Christ was sometimes attached. In one case, the crucifix was painted with the figure of Christ.

Pendants which may have contained or been regarded as a relic constitute a second category of religious objects. An example of this was excavated in the cathedral: it is a medallion struck on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Jesuit order and which.

Also clearly religious are the scapulars. Scapulars are known to us mainly in the form of small metal pendants but in the period in question these could also have been made from pieces of textile fabric. A

number of examples were found in the cathedral and also during the investigation in St. Paul's. In one vault in the latter church a concentration of metal scapulars was found which were not in a coffin; they probably were retrieved and redeposited together when a number of burials in the vault were cleared.

Finally, there is one other group of religious objects to be mentioned, namely rosaries or paternosters. The investigation in the cathedral confronted us with a problem: it was not possible to reconstitute even one single rosary from all the beads found during the investigation. But during excavations in St. Paul's rosaries were discovered. It was in the vaults where organic materials had been well preserved that the first beads were found. They are wooden examples in a relatively soft kind of wood, very delicate and small and which were easy to miss. More examples were found later, including beads in other materials such as glass or bone. We should therefore also take into account that there were possibly also wooden rosaries among the burials in the cathedral which did not survive in the ground.

In addition to religious objects, clearly non-religious – or at least not religious in the traditional Christian sense of the word – ones were also found in burials. The most important category of these is constituted by coins. During the research in the cathedral a total of about one hundred coins were retrieved, thirty of which had clearly been placed in the coffins intentionally. There is no fixed pattern with regard to the place of the coins in the coffin. Obviously the coins were simply thrown in. Chronologically the coins are distributed equally throughout the centuries: the oldest ones date from the 13th century, the most recent ones from the first half of the 18th century. They are always small coins of a low denomination which leads us to assume that their symbolic value was greater than their nominal one. The custom of placing a coin in the coffin does not conform to medieval and post-medieval traditional Christian teaching. Yet it was obviously considered useful to give the dead a coin in order to allow them to 'pay' for their crossing into the hereafter.

The second non-religious group of objects are the combs. These include a number of large decorative ones made of more luxurious materials, but most are ordinary, everyday combs: double combs with a row of teeth along both sides, the teeth sometimes varying in width. Most combs are made from ivory but there are also a number of wooden examples. Twenty or so combs were collected in the cathedral and the St. Paul's church also yielded a number of them. The combs occurred anywhere in the coffin; therefore they are not specific to the hairstyle. The explanation of the presence of these combs must be looked for in

pagan customs. The comb which had been in contact with the dead body was considered to be unlucky. Therefore, it had to be disposed of as quickly as possible and the easiest way to do this was to place it in the coffin of the deceased.

Finally, evidence for another strange practice was noted in a vault in St. Paul's Church. In one and the same vault two child's burials were examined and both coffins yielded a small round brush with long bristles and a short handle. An explanation for this has not yet been found.

Conclusion

The present paper is based on the results of research in only two of the many churches in Antwerp. It is important that we are aware of the geographic limitations of the data referred to. A broader investigation, involving a larger area, may reveal regional differences with regard to the customs related to death and mortuary practices. It is also important to emphasise the fact that the data always con-

cern people who were buried in the church and who therefore, by definition, belonged to a socially privileged group. Undoubtedly considerable differences in mortuary practices will have occurred throughout the various social strata of society. However, the information now available does not allow us to establish what these differences were. What is surprising is the fact that heathen customs or customs not tolerated by the church did occur in such a privileged environment, where one would normally assume them to be absent. It has become clear that it was obviously considered important to provide the dead intentionally with some items, which thus often reveals that non-Christian custom were practised.

Careful investigation of Christian burial grounds can provide a considerable amount of interesting information about this aspect of culture. Generally, death is approached with great reserve in spite of the fact that it is so commonplace. Because of this – as well as because of some other factors – the written evidence concerning real-life mortuary practices is rather limited and this in turn emphasizes the importance of the archaeological data.

Johan Veeckman
Stad Antwerpen - Kunsthistorische Musea
Afdeling Opgravingen
Godefriduskaai
2000 - Antwerpen
België

H. Bruchhaus und L. Finke

Zur Anthropologie mittelalterlicher Populationen im Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet

Siedlungsraum (Abb. 1)

Das Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet (bzw. der mitteldeutsche Raum) war in früherer Zeit von siedlungsungünstigen Gebirgen, Sand-, Wald- und Sumpfgebieten umgeben und stellte somit ein relativ geschlossenes Siedlungsareal dar. Nach Bach *et al.* (1972) gab es im Süden und Südwesten nur einige schmale Verbindungswege nach Ober- und Unterfranken sowie nach Niederhessen. Für Kontakte mit den südöstlichen Nachbargebieten dagegen war das Elbtal von großer Bedeutung.

Voraussetzungen (Abb. 2)

Langjährige archäologische Ausgrabungs- und Forschungstätigkeit der zuständigen Landesämter (Landesmuseen Halle, Weimar und Dresden), intensive und fachgerechte Bodendenkmalpflege, die nicht zuletzt von Mitarbeitern der Regionalmuseen und zahlreichen ehrenamtlichen Helfern unterstützt wurde, sowie eigene Ausgrabungen führten zur Ansammlung umfangreicher archäologischer Fundkomplexe und, auf Grund der für Skelettmaterial in der Regel günstigen Erhaltungsbedingungen (überwiegend kalkhaltige Böden!), zur Auffindung zahlreicher gut erhaltener Skelette.

Eine sehr gute interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem Institut für Humangenetik und Anthropologie mit den Landes- und den Regionalmuseen ermöglichte die Konzentration eines großen Teiles des im Untersuchungsgebiet geborgenen Skelettmaterials in unserer Einrichtung. So beherbergt die Sammlung des Jenaer Institutes zur Zeit Skelettreste von ca. 25.000 Individuen, die aus Einzelgräbern, Gräberfeldern und/oder Sammelserien stammen und den Zeitraum vom Neolithikum bis in die Neuzeit abdecken. Etwa ein Drittel des vorhandenen Skelettmaterials ist chronologisch dem Mittelalter zuzuordnen.

Fundmaterial (Tab. 1 und 2)

Aus dem zu betrachtenden Zeithorizont (mit den archäologischen Komplexen: frühes und spätes Mittelalter) liegen zur Zeit Angaben zu den Skelettfunden von ca. 42 früh- bzw. 40 spätmittelalterlichen Fundorten vor (vgl. Bach 1986; Bach & Bach 1989)

Zu den größeren Fundkomplexen (bezogen auf die Kulturgruppe und die Anzahl der geborgenen Skelette), die bisher zumindest zum Teil anthropologisch bearbeitet wurden, gehören die Gräberfelder von Dachwig, Merxleben, Mittelsömmern, Mühlhausen, Schloßvippach, Schlotheim, Weimar (frühes Mittelalter) sowie Briesnitz, Dreitzsch, Espenfeld, Rohnstedt, Wichmar und Zöllnitz (spätes Mittelalter).

Nahezu alle Funde stammen aus dem Westteil des Arbeitsgebietes. Fundleere bzw. -arme Bereiche, vor allem im sächsischen Raum, sind auf unterschiedliche Ursachen, wie räumliche Differenzierung der Erhaltungsbedingungen für Skelettreste (Bodensubstrat) sowie den Forschungsstand zurückzuführen.



Abb. 1. - Das Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet.

Tab. 1

Fundorte: Frühes Mittelalter

Lfd.- Nr.	Fundort	Kreis	Lfd.- Nr.	Fundort	Kreis
1	Alach	Erfurt	22	Merxleben	Langensalza
2	Ammern	Mühlhausen	23	Mittelsömmern	Langensalza
3	Clingen	Sondershausen	24	Mönchenholzhausen	Erfurt
4	Dachwig	Erfurt	25	Mühlhausen	Mühlhausen
5	Emersleben	Halberstadt	26	Niedertrebra	Apolda
6	Erfurt	Erfurt	27	Obermöllern	Naumburg
7	Griefstedt	Sömmerda	28	Oberweimar	Weimar
8	Großörner	Hettstedt	29	Orlishausen	Sömmerda
9	Großurleben	Langensalza	30	Oßmannstedt	Apolda
10	Hardisleben	Sömmerda	31	Rathewitz	Naumburg
11	Haßleben	Erfurt	32	Schloßvippach	Erfurt
12	Hedersleben	Quedlinburg	33	Schlotheim	Mühlhausen
13	Henschleben	Sömmerda	34	Schöningen	Helmstedt
14	Herbsleben	Langensalza	35	Schöps	Jena
15	Ingersleben	Erfurt	36	Sittichenbach	Querfurt
16	Kaltensundheim	Meiningen	37	Sömmerda	Sömmerda
17	Kaltenwestheim	Meiningen	38	Stedten	Eisfeld
18	Kapellendorf	Apolda	39	Stößen	Weißenfels
19	Kleinurleben	Langensalza	40	Sotternheim	Erfurt
20	Leubingen	Sömmerda	41	Weimar	Weimar
21	Lützen	Weißenfels	42	Westgreußen	Sondershausen

Tab. 2

Fundorte: Spätes Mittelalter

Lfd.- Nr.	Fundort	Kreis	Lfd.- Nr.	Fundort	Kreis
1	Altrommatzsch	Meißen	21	Laasdorf	Stadtroda
2	Briesnitz	Dresden	22	Leipzig	Leipzig
3	Berlstedt	Weimar	23	Lobeda	Jena
4	Bösleben	Arnstadt	24	Naumburg	Naumburg
5	Bodelwitz	Pößneck	25	Neuschmidtstedt	Erfurt
6	Camburg	Jena	26	Possendorf	Weimar
7	Dessau-Mossigkau	Dessau	27	Rohnstedt	Sondershausen
8	Dreitzsch	Pößneck	28	Rudolstadt	Rudolstadt
9	Espenfeld	Arnstadt	29	Schirmenitz	Oschatz
10	Gommerstedt	Arnstadt	30	Sundremda	Rudolstadt
11	Großbromstedt	Apolda	31	Tannroda	Weimar
12	Großschwabhausen	Weimar	32	Taubach	Weimar
13	Halle	Halle	33	Tilleda	Sangerhausen
14	Heiligenkreuz	Naumburg	34	Utenbach	Apolda
15	Jägersdorf	Jena	35	Weimar - Ottern	Weimar
16	Jena - Burgau	Jena	36	Wenigenjena	Jena
17	Jenaprießnitz	Jena	37	Wichmar	Jena
18	Jena - Zwätzen	Jena	38	Wonnitz	Jena
19	Kleinschwabhausen	Weimar	39	Zöllnitz	Jena
20	Laas	Oschatz	40	Zöthen	Jena

Abb. 2. - Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet, Definition und Karte nach Behrens (1973), ergänzt.

Arbeits- und Forschungsgebiet der Landesämter für Archäologische Denkmalpflege der Länder Sachsen (Dresden), Sachsen-Anhalt (Halle) und Thüringen (Weimar), sowie des Institutes für Humangenetik und Anthropologie (Jena).

Alters- und Geschlechtsverteilung (vgl. Tab. 3, 4 und 5)

Die Alters- und Geschlechtsverteilung ist, soweit eine Bestimmung der Alters- und Geschlechtsbestimmung auf der Basis der von Ferembach *et al.* (1979) zusammengestellten Empfehlungen für die Alters- und Geschlechtsdiagnose am Skelett möglich war, aus den Tabellen 3 und 4 ersichtlich.

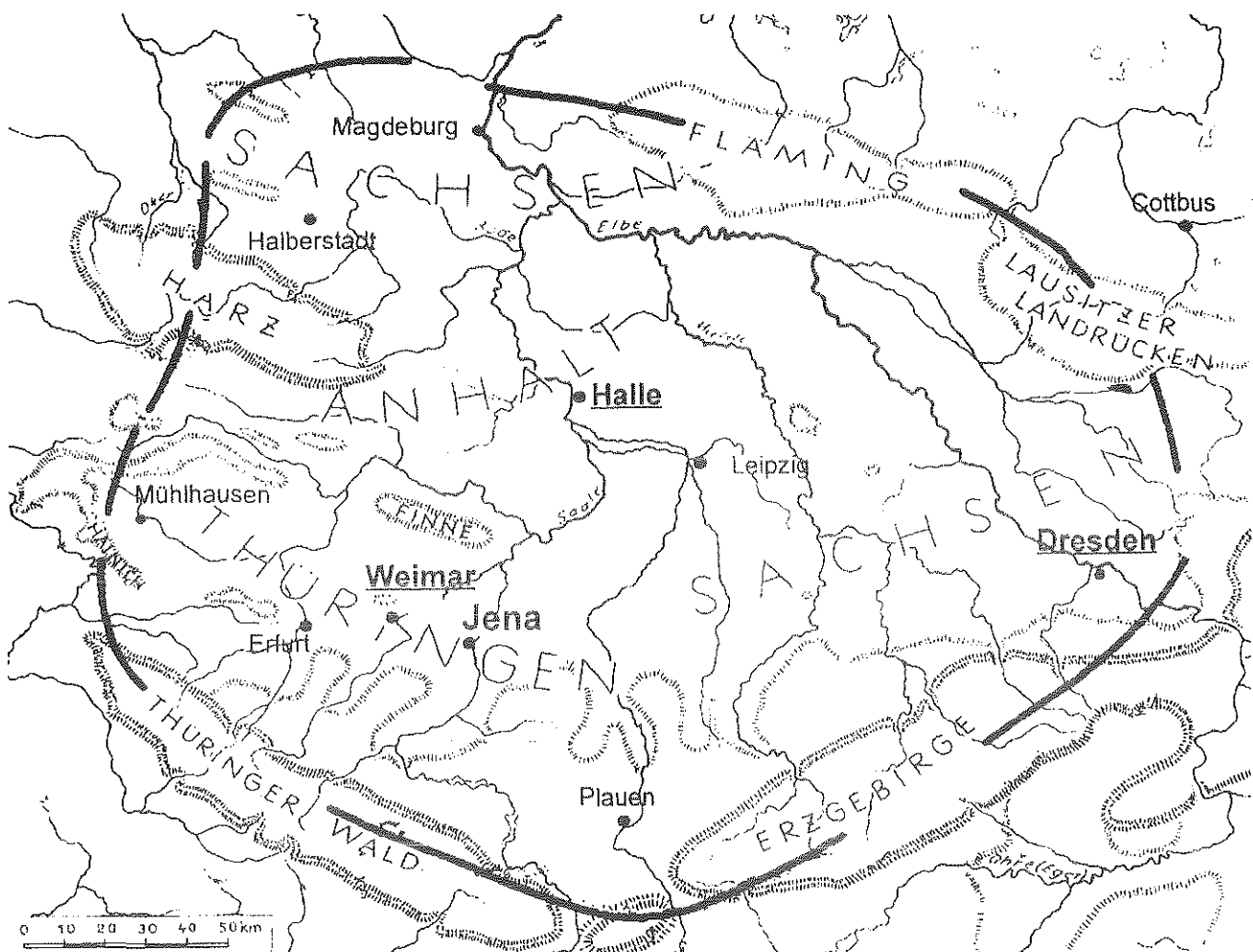
Ohne eine Wertung anzuschließen, fällt auf, daß im späten Mittelalter der Anteil der Verstorbenen bei den Kindern (insbesondere bei der Altersgruppe Infans 1) deutlich höher liegt, als bei der gleichaltrigen Gruppe im frühen Mittelalter. Entsprechend ist der prozentuale Anteil der Erwachsenen (hier besonders die Altersgruppe zwischen 40 und 60 Jahren) im frühen Mittelalter deutlich höher als im späten Mittelalter.

Das Geschlechterverhältnis, ausgedrückt als Maskulinitätsindex (MI), ist in der Summe im frühen Mittelalter und im späten Mittelalter gleich niedrig, d.h., der Anteil der auf den untersuchten Gräberfeldern bestatteten Frauen ist höher (frühes Mittelalter: 55,6%; spätes Mittelalter: 55,5%) als der der Männer (frühes Mittelalter: 44,4%; spätes Mittelalter: 44,5%).

Einen noch deutlicheren Unterschied zeigt das Geschlechterverhältnis bei Berücksichtigung des Alters der Bestatteten. Sowohl im frühen als auch im späten Mittelalter ist der Anteil der Verstorbenen adulten Frauen (20 bis 39 Jahre) höher als der der gleichaltrigen Männer (Maskulinitätsindex beträgt für das frühe Mittelalter 51,8 und für das späte Mittelalter 61,0). Im höheren Alter (40 Jahre und älter) dreht sich das Geschlechterverhältnis um (Maskulinitätsindex im frühen Mittelalter: 131,8; im späten Mittelalter: 119,5). Während im Alter von 20 bis 39 Jahren das Geschlechterverhältnis im frühen und späten Mittelalter gleich ist, scheint es im höheren Alter (40 Jahre und älter) im späten Mittelalter zu einer Verringerung des Unterschiedes im Geschlechterverhältnis zu kommen (vgl. auch Tab. 5).

Körperhöhe (vgl. Tab. 6)

Die mittlere Körperhöhe (Tab. 6) der Männer aus dem frühen Mittelalter, bestimmt nach Breiting (1938), beträgt 172,1 cm, die der Männer des späten Mittelalters 170,8 cm. Die Frauen des frühen Mittel-



Tab. 3
Alterszusammensetzung

Altersstufe	Zeitstellung			
	Frühes Mittelalter ¹		Spätes Mittelalter ²	
	n	%	n	%
Infans 1	25	9,96	462	43,42
Infans 2	25	9,96	132	12,41
Juvenis	11	4,38	36	3,38
Adultus	86	34,26	265	24,91
Maturus	82	32,67	138	12,97
Senilis	22	8,76	31	2,91
Insgesamt	251		1064	
Subadult ³	65	23,64	631	55,74
Erwachsen ³	210	76,36	501	44,26
Insgesamt ³	275		1132	

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)
² Slawische Gräberfelder (Esenfeld, Dreitzsch, Rohnstedt)
³ einschließlich nicht näher altersbestimmbarer Individuen

Tab. 4
Geschlechtszusammensetzung

	Zeitstellung			
	Frühes Mittelalter ¹		Spätes Mittelalter ²	
	n	%	n	%
Männer	92	44,4	238	44,5
Frauen	115	55,6	297	55,5
Mask.-index ³	800		801	

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)
² Slawische Gräberfelder (Esenfeld, Dreitzsch, Rohnstedt)
³ Maskulinitätsindex = Männer pro 1000 Frauen

Tab. 5
Geschlechts- und Alterszusammensetzung

Geschlecht	Alter (in Jahren)	Zeitstellung			
		Frühes Mittelalter ¹		Spätes Mittelalter ²	
		n	%	n	%
Männer:	20 bis 39	29	33,33	100	52,08
	40 und älter	58	66,67	92	47,92
Frauen:	20 bis 39	56	56,00	164	68,05
	40 und älter	44	44,00	77	31,95

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)
² Slawische Gräberfelder (Esenfeld, Dreitzsch, Rohnstedt)

Tab. 6
Mittlere Körperhöhe (cm)

	Zeitstellung			
	Frühes Mittelalter ¹		Spätes Mittelalter ²	
	n	H	n	H
Männer	49	172,1	215	170,8
Frauen	24	160,6	218	160,4

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)
² Slawische Gräberfelder (Esenfeld, Dreitzsch, Rohnstedt)

Tab. 7
Erhaltungszustand der Gebisse

Frühes Mittelalter ¹			Spätes Mittelalter ²		
n	CDI ³	CAI ⁴	n	CDI ³	CAI ⁴
93	58,2	70,6	487	67,6-73,4	79,7-82,3

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)
² Slawische Gräberfelder (Rohnstedt, Dreitzsch, Zöllnitz, Esenfeld)
³ CDI (Comparativer Dental - Index nach Brinch, Möller-Christensen 1959):
⁴ CAI (Comparativer Alveolar - Index)

alters sind nach H. Bach (1965) im Mittel 160,6 cm, die Frauen des späten Mittelalters 160,4 cm groß.

Pathologische Veränderungen (vgl. Tab. 7 bis 12)

An unserer Einrichtung wurden und werden insbesondere an den Kauorganen (Dietz & May 1975; Ehmer 1968; Pertzsch 1987; Rabold 1983; Reinhardt 1970; Volkmann 1983; Zielinski 1980), an der Wirbelsäule und an den großen Gelenken (Hartmann 1984, Liebert 1969, Piontek & Wunderlich 1982 und

Tab. 8
Parodontopathiebefall

Zeitstellung	n	(%)	(Vertrauensintervall)
Frühes Mittelalter	7	87,5	(77,4 - 93,6)
Spätes Mittelalter			
-Espenfeld (Gräberfeld)	92	66,3	(55,7 - 75,8)
-Rohnstedt (Gräberfeld)	111	81,1	(72,5 - 87,9)
-Zöllnitz (Gräberfeld)	59	61,0	(47,4 - 73,5)
-Reckhahn (Gräberfeld)	137	55,5	(46,8 - 63,9)
-Dreitzsch (Gräberfeld)	99	93,9	(87,9 - 97,7)
(gesamt)	498	71,5	(65,7 - 74,1)

1986) epidemiologische Studien durchgeführt (vgl. Bach 1986; Bach & Bach 1989).

Die Beurbarkeit von Veränderungen an den Zähnen und im Alveolarbereich der Gebisse sowie die Einschätzung der degenerativen Veränderungen der Wirbelsäule und der großen Gelenke hängt stark vom Erhaltungszustand des Skelettmaterials ab.

Der Erhaltungszustand der Kauorgane, bewertet durch den Comparativen Dental-Index nach Brinch & Möller-Christensen (1959), kann als noch gut bezeichnet werden. Dabei wird der Erhaltungszustand der Gebisse aus dem späten Mittelalter besser eingeschätzt als der Erhaltungszustand der Gebisse aus dem frühen Mittelalter (vgl. Tab. 7).

Der Erhaltungszustand der beurteilbaren Wirbel kann für das frühe Mittelalter und das Gräberfeld Rohnstedt (spätes Mittelalter) als gut, für das Gräberfeld Espenfeld (spätes Mittelalter) als mittelmäßig bis gut bezeichnet werden. Es wird deutlich, daß die Wirbelkörper im Durchschnitt deutlich besser erhalten sind als die kleinen Gelenke der Wirbel (Ausnahme: kleine Gelenke der Wirbel der Individuen des frühen Mittelalters - Erhaltungszustand = 80%). Nur mittelmäßig erhalten sind im gesamten bearbeiteten Skelettmaterial die großen Gelenke (vgl. Tab. 10).

Kauorgan

Als Ergebnis der Untersuchungen des Parodontopathiebefalls zeigt sich bei einem Vergleich der untersuchten Gebisse eine deutliche Abnahme des horizontalen Abbaus des Alveolarrandes vom frühen zum späten Mittelalter (frühes Mittelalter = durchschnittlicher Parodontopathiebefall von 87,5%; spätes Mittelalter = durchschnittlicher Parodontopathiebefall von 71,5%).

Die Einschätzung des Kariesbefalles eines Gebisses wird u.a. mit Hilfe der Berechnung der Kariesintensität und der Kariesfrequenz (nach Stloukal 1963) vorgenommen (siehe Tab 9). Im Gegensatz zu den degenerativen Veränderungen am Alveolarrand steigen sowohl die Kariesintensität als auch die Kariesfrequenz vom frühen Mittelalter zum späten Mittelalter in ihren Durchschnittswerten leicht an.

Tab. 9
Kariesintensität und Kariesfrequenz

Zeitstellung	Kariesintensität ¹	Kariesfrequenz ²
Frühes Mittelalter	19,5 (18,2 - 21,7)	72,0 (61,9 - 80,9)
Spätes Mittelalter		
- Großschwabhausen	18,4 (13,3 - 23,8)	66,6 (34,8 - 90,1)
- Rohnstedt	18,5 (17,0 - 20,0)	75,8 (67,4 - 82,9)
- Zöllnitz	24,3 (22,1 - 26,3)	76,4 (66,1 - 85,0)
- Espenfeld	21,2 (20,0 - 22,4)	76,8 (70,2 - 82,6)
- Jena	16,9 (14,9 - 19,9)	60,0 (45,2 - 73,6)
- Dreitzsch	19,7 (18,3 - 21,1)	81,3 (72,6 - 88,2)
(gesamt)	20,2 (19,7 - 20,9)	75,3 ³ (71,9 - 78,8)

¹ Kariesintensität (nach Stloukal 1963):
Summe des Prozentsätze kariöser Zähne, bezogen auf vorhandene Zähne + intra vitam verlorener Zähne bezogen auf die beobachtbaren Zahnorte

² Kariesfrequenz (nach Stloukal 1963):
Summe der Prozentsätze:
der Individuen mit mindestens einem kariösen Zahn;
der Individuen mit mindestens einem intra vitalen Verlust;
der Individuen mit mindestens einem kariösen Zahn und einem intra vitalen Verlust

³ ohne Jena
() Vertrauensgrenzen

Tab. 10

Erhaltungszustand der Wirbel- und Gelenkanteile

Frühes Mittelalter ¹				Spätes Mittelalter ²			
				Espenfeld		Rohnstedt	
beurteilbare Anteile (bei „n“ Individuen)							
		nI = 210		nI = 111		nI = 116	
	N	n	%	n	%	n	%
Wirbel	24	3856	77	1720	65	2175	78
Wirbelkörper							
Halswirbelkörper	7	1052	72	865	58	551	68
Brustwirbelkörper	12	1892	75	865	50	1120	80
Lendenwirbelkörper	5	911	87	405	73	504	87
Deckplatten	22	7246	77	2476	50	3505	67
Bodenplatten	23						
Wirbelgelenkflächen (ohne Dentoatlantis und ohne craniales Atlasgelenk)	94	15787	80	4948	47	6500	60
Gelenkflächen (ohne distale Hand- und Fußgelenk- flächen)	26	900	48	1323	46	1952	62

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)

² Slawische Gräberfelder (Espenfeld, Rohnstedt)

nI untersuchte Individuen

N maximale Anzahl der Wirbel, Wirbelkörper und Gelenkflächen

n beobachtbare Anzahl der Wirbel, Wirbelkörper und Gelenkflächen

Tab. 11Degenerative Veränderungen an der Wirbelsäule
und den großen Gelenken

Frühes Mittelalter ¹					Spätes Mittelalter ²			
	Männer		Frauen		Männer		Frauen	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Spondylosis deformans (Wirbelkörper)	1328	50,6	989	45,2	1197	43,5	1467	34,8
Spondylarthrosis deformans								
1. Wirbelkörper	1857	20,8	1323	23,0	1720	38,1	1775	21,8
2. Gelenkflächen								
2. 1. rechts	2698	14,8	1965	13,4	2819	24,2	2875	15,1
2. 2. links	2642	13,2	1922	12,2	2875	22,7	2879	12,6
2. 3. insgesamt	5340	14,0	3887	12,8	5694	23,9	5754	14,1
Arthrosis deformans (Gelenkflächen)	484	60,1	416	32,9	1611	40,8	1664	35,8

¹ Germanische Gruppen (Thüringer und Franken)
² Slawische Gräberfelder

Degenerative Veränderungen

Bei Betrachtung der Ergebnisse (Tab. 11) sind folgende Zusammenhänge auffällig:

1. Eine Spondylosis deformans (Wirbelkörper) kann im frühen Mittelalter durchschnittlich häufiger nachgewiesen werden als im späten Mittelalter. In beiden Populationen ist der Befall bei Frauen niedriger als bei Männern.
2. Auch Spondylarthrosis deformans (Wirbelkörper und Gelenkflächen) läßt sich sowohl im frühen als auch im späten Mittelalter nachweisen. Während die erzielten Ergebnisse für Männer und Frauen des frühen Mittelalters für die Wirbelkörper mit 20,8 bzw. 23,0% und für die Gelenkflächen mit 14,0% bzw. 12,8% etwa gleich hoch sind, erreichen die Werte im späten Mittelalter bei den Männern für die Wirbelkörper 38,1% bzw. für die Gelenkflächen 23,9%. Mit 21,8% (Wirbelkörper) und 14,1% (Gelenkflächen) liegen die Werte der Frauen im Bereich der Werte des frühen Mittelalters.
3. Die Arthrosis deformans erreicht ihren höchsten Wert (60,1%) bei den Männern des frühen Mittelalters. Mit 40,8% liegen die Werte der Männer des späten Mittelalters deutlich darunter. Im Gegensatz zu Werten, die für die Männer berechnet wurden, sind die degenerativen Veränderungen bei den Frauen deutlich geringer und differenzieren zwischen früh- und spätem Mittelalter nur gering (frühes Mittelalter: 32,9%, spätes Mittelalter: 35,8%).

Bei Betrachtung der einzelnen großen Gelenke der beiden spätmittelalterlichen Gräberfelder Espenfeld und Rohnstedt (Tab. 12) fällt auf, daß die Werte

für die arthrotischen Veränderungen der Individuen des Gräberfeldes Espenfeld (im Durchschnitt: 23%) deutlich unter den Werten des Gräberfeldes Rohnstedt (49,5%) liegen. Die arthrotischen Veränderungen werden bei Männern und Frauen des Gräberfeldes Espenfeld am Schultergelenk (Männer 33%; Frauen 19%) und am Hüftgelenk (Männer 51%; Frauen 32%) besonders häufig beobachtet. Im Gräberfeld Rohnstedt sind die stärksten arthrotischen Veränderungen bei Frauen für das Iliosacralgelenk (69%); das Hüftgelenk (69%) sowie das Ellenbogengelenk (60%) und bei den Männern für das Hüftgelenk (60%), das Iliosacralgelenk (54%), das Ellenbogengelenk (53%) sowie das Schultergelenk (50%) nachgewiesen.

Literatur

- BACH A. 1986: *Mittelalterliche Bevölkerungen im deutsch-slawischen Kontaktgebiet*, Weimarer Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte 19, Weimar.
- BACH A., BACH H. & K. SIMON 1972: Anthropologische Aspekte der Bevölkerungsentwicklung im westlichen Mitteldeutschland, *Jahresschr. mitteldt. Vorgeschichte* 56, Halle/S., 7-38.
- BACH H. 1965: Zur Berechnung der Körperhöhe aus den langen Gliedmaßenknochen weiblicher Skelette, *Anthrop. Anz.* 29, 12-21.
- BACH H. & BACH A. 1989: *Paläanthropologie im Mittelbe - Saale - Werra - Gebiet*, Weimarer

Tab. 12

Arthrosis deformans großer Gelenke

	Spätes Mittelalter *							
	Esenfeld				Rohnstedt			
	Männer n	%	Frauen n	%	Männer n	%	Frauen n	%
Schulter	102	33	108	19	145	50	144	36
Ellenbogen	81	11	76	14	156	53	150	60
Hand	31	16	25	4	59	36	62	34
Iliosacralgelenk	90	14	113	15	145	54	143	69
Hüfte	168	51	186	32	195	60	186	69
Knie	71	25	62	8	163	40	174	33
Fuß	47	19	42	5	106	42	124	31
gesamt	642	28	681	18	969	50	983	49
* Slawische Gräberfelder								

- Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte 23, Weimar.
- BREITINGER E. 1937: Zur Berechnung der Körperhöhe aus den langen Gliedmaßenknochen, *Anthrop. Anz.* 14, 249-274.
- BRINCH O. & MÖLLER-CHRISTENSEN V. 1949: Über vergleichende Untersuchungen über das Kariesvorkommen an archäologischem Schädelmaterial, *Schweiz. Mschr. Zahnheilkd.* 59, 853-883.
- DIETZ Ch. & MAY V.: Stomatologisch-anthropologische Untersuchungen an Skeletten eines mittelalterlichen Gräberfeldes aus dem deutsch-slawischen Kontakt.
- EHMER U. 1968: *Stomatologische und anthropologische Untersuchungen an Schädeln von Kindern und Jugendlichen aus dem 11. und 12. Jahrhundert (Espenfeld)*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- FEREMBACH D., SCHWIDETZKY I. & STLOUKAL M. 1979: Empfehlungen für die Alters- und Geschlechtsdiagnose am Skelett, *Homo* 30, 1-32.
- HARTMANN S. 1984: *Degenerative Veränderungen an den großen Körpergelenken bei einer mittelalterlichen Bevölkerungsgruppe (Rohnstedt, Kr. Sondershausen)*, Diplomarbeit Jena.
- LIEBERT H. 1969: *Pathologische Wirbelsäulen- und Gelenkbefunde an Skelettmaterial aus dem 11.-12. Jahrhundert u. Z. unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der degenerativen Wirbel- und Gelenkleiden*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- PERTZSCH R. 1987: *Stomatologische Untersuchungen an Schädeln der hochmittelalterlichen Bevölkerungsgruppe von Dreitzsch, Kr. Pößneck*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- PIONTEK E. & WUNDERLICH H. 1982: *Zur Pathologie der Wirbelsäule – Untersuchungen an frühgeschichtlichem Skelettmaterial*, Med. Diplomarbeit Jena.
- PIONTEK E. & WUNDERLICH H. 1986: *Zur Pathologie der Wirbelsäule des frühgeschichtlichen Menschen aus dem Mittelelbe-Saale-Gebiet*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- RABOLD Ch. 1983: *Stomatologische Untersuchungen an Kindern und Jugendlichen der mittelalterlichen Bevölkerung von Rohnstedt, Kr. Sondershausen*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- REINHARDT W. 1970: *Stomatologische und anthropologische Untersuchungen an Schädeln aus dem 11. und 12. Jahrhundert (Espenfeld, Kr. Arnstadt)*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- STLOUKAL M. 1963: Der Gesundheitszustand der Gebisse der Populationen im großmährischen Mikulčice, *Anthropologie* 1, Brno, 35-45.
- VOLKMANN A. 1983: *Stomatologische Untersuchungen an Erwachsenen der Völkerwanderungszeit aus dem Thüringer Becken*, Med. Diss. Jena.
- ZIELINSKI H. 1980: *Stomatologische Untersuchungen an Erwachsenen der mittelalterlichen Bevölkerung von Rohnstedt, Kr. Sondershausen*, Med. Diss. Jena.

Epigenetische Merkmale bei Bevölkerungsgruppen des frühen Mittelalters aus dem Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet

1 Einleitung

Innerhalb Mitteldeutschlands bietet das Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet für die anthropologische Analyse der Bevölkerungsentwicklung verhältnismäßig gute Bedingungen. Es stellt einen relativ geschlossenen Raum dar und ist, mit einigen Einschränkungen, seit etwa siebentausend Jahren besiedelt.

Auf der damit vorhandenen Materialbasis aufbauend, ist die Konzeption der Arbeitsgruppe Paläanthropologie/Historische Anthropologie entstanden. Ihre Zielstellung ist die Rekonstruktion der biologischen Situation und der Dynamik ur- und frühgeschichtlicher Bevölkerungsgruppen des Mittelbe-Saale-Gebietes.

Das bedeutet, daß durch zahlreiche Querschnittsuntersuchungen der Bevölkerungen eines relativ kleinen Siedlungsgebietes versucht werden soll, in Verbindung mit einer langen archäologischen Forschungstradition, die Lebenssituation der Bevölkerungen dieser Region in ihrer gesamten Komplexität zu rekonstruieren.

Die Analyse der biologischen Zustände von Bevölkerungsgruppen/Populationen und deren diachronen Veränderungen nimmt dabei eine zentrale Stellung ein. Der populationsspezifische Polymorphismus und seine von endogenen und exogenen Vorgängen und Strukturen abhängige Dynamik stellt die Leitvorstellungen dar (Bach & Bach 1989).

Der Anthropologe muß sich zunächst auf die vom Prähistoriker anhand weniger kultureller Merkmale einer Kulturgruppe zugeordneten lokalen Siedlergemeinschaften stützen. In der Regel bleibt ihm auch keine Alternative und so ist er gezwungen, die auf einem Bestattungsplatz beigesetzten Individuen als einen temporären Ausschnitt einer lokalen Population aufzufassen.

Bei Streufunden oder Einzelgräbern bzw. bei der Analyse mehrerer Bestattungsplätze des Siedlungsraumes gleicher Kulturzugehörigkeit kann andererseits aber auch davon ausgegangen werden, daß sie zu mehreren lokalen Populationen gehören.

Die Bestimmung anthropologischer Parameter (Demographie, morphologisch-metrischer bzw. mor-

phognostischer Status, Pathologica) haben die Herausarbeitung von Unterschieden oder Übereinstimmungen bzw. von Unähnlichkeiten oder Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den einzelnen Populationen zum Ergebnis.

Aus populationsgenetischen Gründen sind dabei jedoch Aussagen über reale Verwandtschaftsbeziehungen nicht möglich. Anthropologische Ähnlichkeitsanalysen können allerdings unter günstigen Voraussetzungen anderweitig gewonnene Anhaltspunkte für ethnogenetische Prozesse stützen aber auch in Frage stellen.

Es hat sich gezeigt, daß die morphologisch-metrischen Analysen von Bevölkerungen aus den verschiedensten Gründen (Erhaltungszustand des Skelettmaterials, unzureichende Stichprobengröße) nicht immer zu sinnvoll interpretierbaren Differenzierungen bzw. Ähnlichkeiten führen. Morphognostische und epigenetische Skelettmerkmale sollen sich nach Meinung mehrerer Autoren (Rösing 1982) für kleinräumige Vergleiche einzelner lokaler Populationen dagegen besser eignen.

Da im Mittelbe-Saale-Gebiet für das frühe Mittelalter (4.-7. Jahrhundert) gerade relativ kleine lokale Bevölkerungsgruppen charakteristisch zu sein scheinen, kann angenommen werden, daß morphognostische oder epigenetische Merkmale des Skeletts eher zur Differenzierung dieser Bevölkerungsgruppen beitragen können.

Im Folgenden soll versucht werden, Teilergebnisse einer auf dieser Annahme basierenden Analyse darzustellen und sie zu interpretieren.

2 Material und Methoden

Es wurden zwei Serien des frühen Mittelalters untersucht. Da diese Analysen noch nicht abgeschlossen sind, werden hier nur Teilergebnisse vorgestellt.

1. *Mittelsömmern, Lkr. Bad Langensalza*: 7. Jahrhundert, Germanen (Thüringer); Gräberfeld;

$n_{\max} = 102$, (Finke 1988).

2. *Rohnstedt, Lkr. Sondershausen*: 8./9. Jahrhundert, Slawen, Gräberfeld; $n_{\max} = 462$, (Bach 1986).

Es handelt sich um Serien unterschiedlicher Größe und unterschiedlicher Ethnien. Mittelsömmern stellt dabei mit 102 bestatteten Individuen die größte germanische Gruppe des frühen Mittelalters dar.

Von diesen beiden Serien wurden an allen verfügbaren Schädeln bzw. Schädelteilen morphologische Merkmale (Discreta, epigenetische Merkmale) in der Häufigkeit ihres Auftretens untersucht.

Unter epigenetischen Merkmalen (nichtmetrischen Merkmalen, Discreta) versteht man kleinräumige, diskontinuierlich variierende, morphologische Merkmale des Skeletts. Meist treten sie alternativ auf (Merkmalsausprägung vorhanden/nicht vorhanden). Ein Teil hat mehr als zwei mögliche Ausprägungen, da sie aber nur geringe Ausdehnung haben, dürfte es schwierig sein, sie durch metrische Verfahren zu bestimmen.

Zu den Discreta werden anatomische Varianten wie das Auftreten zusätzlicher kleiner Knochen, zusätzlicher Foramina, hyperostotische Varianten oder numerische und morphologische Varianten im Bereich der Zähne gezählt.

Es wird in den meisten allgemeinen Arbeiten davon ausgegangen, daß sie eine hohe Heritabilität, geringe Interkorrelationen und eine geringe Geschlechts- und Altersvariabilität aufweisen (s.u.a. Rösing 1982; Sjøvold 1976, 1984).

In der vorliegenden Analyse wurden 19 epigenetische Merkmale des Schädels einbezogen (s. Tabellen 1-4). Dabei handelt es sich vor allem um Variationen der Schädelnähte bzw. um accessorische Knochen.

Für die einfache Handhabung und Auswertung der Merkmale wurden die von Czarnetzki, Kaufmann, Schoch und Xirotis (1985) verwendeten Codes leicht modifiziert. Die Ziffern 1-8 entsprechen folgenden Ausprägungen für bilaterale bzw. für die in der Symmetrieebene liegenden Merkmale des Craniums.

Bilaterale Merkmale

- 1 Merkmal RECHTS nicht ausgebildet, LINKS nicht beurteilbar
- 2 Merkmal LINKS nicht ausgebildet, RECHTS nicht beurteilbar
- 3 Merkmal RECHTS vorhanden, LINKS nicht beurteilbar
- 4 Merkmal LINKS vorhanden, RECHTS nicht beurteilbar
- 5 Merkmal RECHTS vorhanden, Links nicht ausgebildet
- 6 Merkmal LINKS vorhanden, RECHTS nicht ausgebildet
- 7 Merkmale beiderseits nicht ausgebildet
- 8 Merkmale beiderseits vorhanden

Unilaterale Merkmale

- 1 Merkmal nicht ausgebildet
- 3 Merkmal ausgebildet

Die Bestimmung der Infrapopulationsfrequenzen der Merkmale kann auf zwei verschiedenen Arten erfolgen.

1. werden die Einzelmerkmale unabhängig von ihrer Lateralität auf die Individuenzahl bezogen (FI), d.h. es wird die Zahl der Individuen mit einseitig oder beidseitig vorhandenem Merkmal durch die Gesamtzahl der untersuchten Individuen dividiert (Ossenberg 1981).
2. wird der Schwerpunkt der Berechnung auf die Merkmalerfassung der Seiten gelegt (FS). Dabei wird jede Seite als einzelne Information gewertet. Bei dieser Methode wird auch die Information aus schlecht erhaltenem Skelettmaterial mit einbezogen (Wiltshke-Schrotta 1991).

FS = Anzahl der rechten + linken Seiten mit vorhandenem Merkmal/Summe aller rechten und linken Seiten

FI = Zahl der Individuen mit einseitig oder beidseitig vorhandenem Merkmal/Gesamtzahl der Individuen

3 Ergebnisse und Diskussion

In den Tabellen 1 und 2 (Frequenzen der einzelnen Ausprägungsformen) wird aufgeschlüsselt, welches Merkmal in welcher Ausprägungsform wie oft vorkommt.

Dabei bedeuten:

NR	Variablennummer
TRAIT	Merkmal/Variable
N	Zahl der untersuchten Schädel
n	Anzahl der Beobachtungen des jeweiligen Codes
%	Frequenzen.

Tabellen 3 und 4 zeigen die Frequenzen der Merkmale beider Geschlechter und aller Altersstufen.

Dabei bedeuten:

SSP	Anzahl der Seiten mit vorhandenem Merkmal
SS	Anzahl der untersuchten Seiten
FS	Merkmalsfrequenzen nach Seiten
SMP	Anzahl der Merkmalsträger
N	Anzahl der untersuchten Individuen
FI	Merkmalsfrequenz nach Individuen

Bei keinem der untersuchten Crania konnten alle Merkmale erhoben werden. Ein Merkmal (Os parietale partitum) war weder in der Populationen von Mittelsömmern (frühes Mittelalter) noch in der von Rohnstedt (spätes Mittelalter) nachweisbar. Dieses

Tabelle 1: Frequenzen der Ausbildungsformen - Mittelsömmern

NR	TRAIT	N	n1	%	n2	%	n3	%	n4	%	n5	%	n6	%	n7	%	n8	%
11	Sutura infraorbitalis	29	3	10%	4	14%	2	7%	3	10%	1	3%		0%	10	34%	6	21%
12	Sutura incisiva	44		0%		0%		0%		0%	1	2%		0%	41	93%	2	5%
13	Sutura incisiva partialis	45		0%		0%	1	2%		0%		0%	3	7%	14	31%	27	60%
14	Os japonicum	45	11	24%	8	18%		0%		0%		0%		0%	26	58%		0%
15	Os japonicum partialis	44	10	23%	7	16%		0%	1	2%		0%		0%	26	59%		0%
16	Sutura metopica	53	46	87%		0%	7	13%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
20	Os parietale partitum	55	1	2%	3	5%		0%		0%		0%		0%	51	93%		0%
22	Os bregmaticum	47	46	98%		0%	1	2%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
23	Sutura mastoideasquamosa	53	1	2%	8	15%		0%		0%		0%		0%	39	74%	1	2%
24	Sutura mastoideasquamosa part.	52	2	4%	3	6%	4	8%	6	12%	2	4%	3	6%	12	23%	20	38%
25	Os apicis	43	35	81%		0%	8	19%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
26	Os incae	44	43	98%		0%	1	2%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
27	Os incae partitum	43	1	2%	2	5%	1	2%	2	5%		0%	2	5%	33	77%	2	5%
30	Pterion X	27	3	11%	7	26%		0%		0%		0%	1	4%	16	59%		0%
31	Os epiptericum	27	2	7%	7	26%	1	4%		0%	2	7%	1	4%	14	52%		0%
32	Sutura frontotemporalis	27	3	11%	7	26%		0%		0%		0%		0%	17	63%		0%
33	Ossicula coronalia	39	36	92%		0%	3	8%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
34	Ossicula sagittalia	37	35	95%		0%	2	5%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
35	Ossicula lambdoidea	42	18	43%		0%	24	57%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%

Tabelle 2: Frequenzen der Ausbildungsformen - Rohnstedt

NR	TRAIT	N	n1	%	n2	%	n3	%	n4	%	n5	%	n6	%	n7	%	n8	%
11	Sutura infraorbitalis	88	8	9%	4	5%	6	7%	2	2%	2	2%	4	5%	37	42%	25	28%
12	Sutura incisiva	140	3	2%	3	2%	1	1%		0%		0%		0%	133	95%		0%
13	Sutura incisiva partialis	141	1	1%		0%	4	3%	2	1%	6	4%	5	4%	23	16%	100	71%
14	Os japonicum	91	11	12%	15	16%	1	1%	1	1%		0%		0%	63	69%		0%
15	Os japonicum partialis	89	13	15%	16	18%	1	1%		0%		0%		0%	59	66%		0%
16	Sutura metopica	173	163	94%		0%	10	6%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
20	Os parietale partitum	167	7	4%	5	3%		0%		0%		0%		0%	155	93%		0%
22	Os bregmaticum	169	167	99%		0%	2	1%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
23	Sutura mastoideasquamosa	157	24	15%	27	17%		0%		0%		0%		0%	105	67%	1	1%
24	Sutura mastoideasquamosa part.	156	11	7%	14	9%	13	8%	11	7%	10	6%	5	3%	26	17%	66	42%
25	Os apicis	174	163	94%		0%	11	6%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
26	Os incae	174	174	100%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
27	Os incae partitum	153	11	7%	8	5%	7	5%	6	4%	6	4%	9	6%	84	55%	22	14%
30	Pterion X	125	18	14%	18	14%		0%		0%		0%		0%	89	71%		0%
31	Os epiptericum	125	18	14%	17	14%		0%	1	1%		0%		0%	88	70%	1	1%
32	Sutura frontotemporalis	124	18	15%	17	14%		0%	1	1%	1	1%		0%	82	66%	5	4%
33	Ossicula coronalia	163	157	96%		0%	6	4%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
34	Ossicula sagittalia	161	141	88%		0%	20	12%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
35	Ossicula lambdoidea	160	55	34%		0%	105	66%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%

Tabelle 3: Merkmalsfrequenzen - Mittelsömmern

NR TRAIT	SSP	SS	FS	N	SMP	FI
11 Sutura infraorbitalis	18	46	39,13%	29	12	41,38%
12 Sutura incisiva	5	88	5,68%	44	3	6,82%
13 Sutura incisiva partialis	58	89	65,17%	45	31	68,89%
14 Os japonicum	0	71	0,00%	45	0	0,00%
15 Os japonicum partialis	1	70	1,43%	44	1	2,27%
16 Sutura metopica	7	53	13,21%	53	7	13,21%
20 Os parietale partitum	0	106	0,00%	55	0	0,00%
22 Os bregmaticum	1	47	2,13%	47	1	2,13%
23 Sutura mastoideasquamosa	2	89	2,25%	53	1	1,89%
24 Sutura mastoideasquamosa part.	55	89	61,80%	52	35	67,31%
25 Os apicis	8	43	18,60%	43	8	18,60%
26 Os incae	1	44	2,27%	44	1	2,27%
27 Os incae partitum	9	80	11,25%	43	7	16,28%
30 Pterion X	1	44	2,27%	27	1	3,70%
31 Os epiptericum	4	44	9,09%	27	4	14,81%
32 Sutura frontotemporalis	0	44	0,00%	27	0	0,00%
33 Ossicula coronalia	3	39	7,69%	39	3	7,69%
34 Ossicula sagittalia	2	37	5,41%	37	2	5,41%
35 Ossicula lambdoidea	24	42	57,14%	42	24	57,14%

Ergebnis wird auch für andere Populationen bestätigt (u.a. Reinhard 1985; Wiltshke-Schrotta 1988, 1991; Höppler 1990).

Im Vergleich der Frequenzen weist die Population von Mittelsömmern bei 10 Merkmalen (sechs Knochenbildungen und vier Nahtvarianten; s. Tabelle 3) größere Werte auf, d.h. diese Merkmale wird bei dieser Population häufiger gefunden.

Ein Charakteristikum für Mittelsömmern scheint das verstärkte Vorhandensein eines Os epiptericum zu sein (9,1% gegenüber 1,4 % bei Rohnstedt). Größere Frequenzen bei den Nahtknochen waren nur bei den Ossicula coronalia nachzuweisen.

In der Maxillarregion ist in der Population von Mittelsömmern eine größere Häufigkeit bei der nicht obliterierten Sutura incisiva zu beobachten. Ein teilweise erfolgter Verschluß dieser Naht (*Sutura incisiva partialis*) ist mit einem etwas größeren Frequenzwert dagegen bei Rohnstedt zu finden.

Die in den Tabellen 1 bis 4 dargestellten Ergebnisse der Analyse epigenetischer Merkmale scheinen die oben gemachte Annahme, daß Discreta sich gut für eine Differenzierung von lokalen Populationen eignen, zu bestätigen.

Die Erweiterung des hier vorgelegten Merkmals-Sets unter Einbeziehung von Merkmalen des post-cranialen Skeletts (s. Czarnetzki, Kaufmann, Schoch

& Xirotiris 1985) und der Zähne (Alt 1996) und einer multivariaten statistischen Analyse der Interpopulationsfrequenzen könnte zu eindeutigeren Aussagen führen.

Daß sich epigenetische Merkmale, vor allem als Merkmalskomplexe, für die Analyse einer Binnengliederung einer Population – bis hinab zum Nachweis von Familien – eignen, konnte Rösing (1987) bei der Untersuchung von altägyptischen Gräberfeldern nachweisen.

Probleme bereitet zur Zeit noch das Fehlen eines sinnvollen allgemeingültigen Merkmalskataloges, besonders weil sich eine ganze Reihe von Merkmalen nicht in ein einfaches Klassifikationssystem einordnen lassen (s.auch Klug & Wittwer-Backofen 1983; Höppler 1990).

Ein weiteres wichtiges Problem stellt die Tatsache dar, daß z.Z. nur wenige Merkmale in ihrer Ererblichkeit bekannt sind. Angaben zur Heritabilität liegen bisher nur von Reinhard und Rösing (1985) sowie von Sjøvold (1984, 1986) vor.

Literatur

ALT KW., PICHLER S., VACH W., HUCKENBECK W., & STLOUKAL M. 1996: Early Bronze Age family

Tabelle 4: Merkmalsfrequenzen - Rohnstedt

NR TRAIT	SSP	SS	FS	N	SMP	FI
11 Sutura infraorbitalis	64	156	41,03%	88	39	44,32%
12 Sutura incisiva	1	273	0,37%	140	1	0,71%
13 Sutura incisiva partialis	217	275	78,91%	141	117	82,98%
14 Os japonicum	2	154	1,30%	91	2	2,20%
15 Os japonicum partialis	1	148	0,68%	89	1	1,12%
16 Sutura metopica	10	173	5,78%	173	10	5,78%
20 Os parietale partitum	0	322	0,00%	167	0	0,00%
22 Os bregmaticum	2	169	1,18%	169	2	1,18%
23 Sutura mastoideasquamosa	2	263	0,76%	157	1	0,64%
24 Sutura mastoideasquamosa part.	171	263	65,02%	156	105	67,31%
25 Os apicis	11	174	6,32%	174	11	6,32%
26 Os incae	0	174	0,00%	174	0	0,00%
27 Os incae partitum	72	274	26,28%	153	50	32,68%
30 Pterion X	0	214	0,00%	125	0	0,00%
31 Os epiptericum	3	214	1,40%	125	2	1,60%
32 Sutura frontotemporalis	12	212	5,66%	124	7	5,65%
33 Ossicula coronalia	6	163	3,68%	163	6	3,68%
34 Ossicula sagittalia	20	161	12,42%	161	20	12,42%
35 Ossicula lambdoidea	105	160	65,63%	160	105	65,63%

burial from Velke Pavlovice. Verification of kinship hypothesis by odontologic and other non-metric traits, *Homo* 46 (3), 256-66.

BACH A., ERNST G., FINKE L. & HOHMANN G. 1986: *Germanen-Slawen-Deutsche. Anthropologische Bearbeitung des frühmittelalterlichen Gräberfeldes von Rohnstedt, Kreis Sondershausen*, Weimarer Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte 19 (Feustel R. ed.), Weimar, Museum für Ur- und Frühgeschichte Thüringens.

BACH H. & BACH A. 1989: *Paläanthropologie im Mittelbe-Saale-Werra-Gebiet*, Weimarer Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte 23 (Feustel R. ed.), Weimar, Museum für Ur- und Frühgeschichte Thüringens.

CZARNETZKI A., KAUFMANN B., SCHOCH M., & XIROTIRIS N. 1985: *Definition der anatomischen Varianten*, (Unpublished).

FINKE L. 1988: *Die anthropologische Analyse des völkerwanderungszeitlichen Gräberfeldes Mittelsömmern*, Dissertation A, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena.

HÖPLER G. 1990: *Epigenetische Variation und Familienstruktur bei den merowingerzeitlichen Alemannen von Kirchheim unter Teck*, Diplomarbeit, MN-Fakultät Ulm.

KLUG S. & WITTWER-BACKOFEN U. 1983: Diskreta im Populationsvergleich, *Homo* 34 (3/4), 153-168.

OSSENBERG N. 1981: An argument for the use of total side frequencies of bilateral nonmetric skeletal traits in population distance analysis: The regression of symmetry on incidence, *Am. J. Phys. Anthropol.* 54, 471-479.

REINHARD R. & RÖSING F.W. (ed.) 1985: Ein Literaturüberblick über Definitionen diskreter Merkmale/anatomischer Varianten am Schädel des Menschen, Ulm.

RÖSING F.W. 1982: Discreta des menschlichen Skeletts – ein kritischer Überblick, *Homo* 33 (2/3), 100-125.

RÖSING F.W. 1987: *Qubbet el Hawa und Elephantine: Zur historischen Anthropologie von Ägypten*, Universität Ulm.

SJOVOLD T. 1976: Die Bedeutung epigenetischer Skelettmerkmale für die Analyse prähistorischer Populationsstichproben. The importance of epigenetic skeletal traits for the study of prehistoric populations, *Homo* 27 (2), 87-94.

SJOVOLD T. 1984: A report on the heritability of some cranial measurements and non-metric traits, in: VAN VARK G.N. & HOWELLS W.W. (eds), *Multivariate Statistical Methods in Physical Anthropology*, D. Reidel Publishing Company, 223-246.

SJOVOLD T. 1986: Intrapopulation distance and genetics of non-metrical traits, *Mitt. Berl. Ges. Anthropol. Ethn. Urgesch.* 7, 81-93.

WILTSCHKE-SCHROTTA K. 1988: *Das frühbronzezeitliche Gräberfeld von Franzhausen I. Analyse der morphologischen Merkmale mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der epigenetischen Merkmale*, Phil.Diss., Universität Wien.

WILTSCHKE-SCHROTTA K. & TESCHLER-NICOLA M. 1991: *Das spätantike Gräberfeld von Lentia/Linz, Tiefer Graben/Flügelhofgasse. Anthropologische Auswertung*, Linzer Archäologische Forschungen 19, Stadtmuseum Linz-Nordico.

Dr. Lutz Finke, U. Dehmel, K. Klinkhardt
& S. Nöther
Institut of Human Genetics and Anthropology,
Historical Anthropology
Kollegiengasse 10
D-07740 Jena, Germany

Sharp Blows on Human Skulls in an early Medieval Cemetery (Kirchheim/Rieß) Anthropological Diagnosis and Archaeological Context

1 Anthropological Diagnosis

Quite frequently the characteristic features of sharp blows to the human skull are not defined clearly enough in anthropological literature (e.g. B. Herrmann *et al.* 1990, 118). As a first step research will therefore have to focus on the possibilities for an anthropological diagnosis of such sharp blows in order to achieve conclusive diagnostic results. This step will provide the basis required for examining the burial context of those individuals that suffered sharp blows to the skull.

Forensic literature (e.g. Berg 1984, 171; Maresch & Spann 1987, 18, fig. 8.) remains the best source for finding out which features are in fact characteristic for sharp blows to the human skull. The features of sharp blows to the human skull continue to be quoted in modern forensic literature because sharp blows, for example those executed with axes, still occur today in connection with crimes, although they are quite rare. In the forensic literature in question, it is explained that sharp blows leave cut edges on the bone, or at least one cut edge if the opposite edge has been fractured (Maresch & Spann 1987, 18, fig 8 B/C.). Whether one edge of the bone impacted by such a sharp blow to the skull is fractured or not depends mainly upon the way the blow is applied. As the weapon may have been turned in the wound after impacting the bone, it is no wonder that we quite often find fractures of larger parts of the skull in connection with sharp blows to the skull. This is particularly obvious in cases where a skull was hit by a sharp blow with a substantial part of the bone being fractured and the wound healing subsequently to a very good degree (e.g. Herrmann *et al.* 1990, 128, fig. 3.2.5.11).

Notches and fractures in the line of the blow do not necessarily have to occur in connection with sharp blows to the skull but they may indeed occur (Berg 1984, 172). Their presence depends on the sharpness and weight of the blade of the weapon which hit the skull. These two features can therefore not be considered primary characteristics for the diagnosis of sharp blows to the human skull.

The cut of a sharp blow affects a bigger part of the bone and is more than a cutting mark since a blow of course bears a lot more power than a simple cut.

In anthropological and archaeological literature one also sometimes finds that some confusion might exist between sharp blows to and trepanations of the human skull (e.g. Herrmann *et al.* 1990, 118; Härke 1992, 212). Normally, however, this is not the case, because even if a fragmented piece of a square cut trepanation is taken, *i.e.* that particular form of a trepanation most likely to be interpreted as a sharp blow to the human skull, cutting marks will usually be found on the bone around this trepanation. This is due to the fact that if a skull is to be trepanned, the skin will first have to be removed. It may be assumed that this removal of the skin does not occur in connection with sharp blows to the skull.

At first sight some healed wounds caused by sharp blows might be confused with bigger vessel impressions. If a closer look is taken at these vessel impressions, however, a rounded sulcus will be found instead of the straight edges caused by a sharp blow (Geldhauser, Guckenhan & Heudorfer 1996, 186).

A senile atrophy on the parietal bone, especially if it only occurs on one side of the skull, might also at first sight be identified as a sharp tangential blow to the skull that grazed the external table of the skull. In the case of senile atrophy, however, a specific porous surface structure is found which will facilitate the distinction between senile atrophy and a sharp blow to the skull (Geldhauser, Guckenhan & Heudorfer 1996, 186).

2 Archaeological context of individuals exhibiting traces of sharp blows to the skull as found in the early medieval cemetery of Kirchheim/Rieß

In 1962-1964 one of the biggest early medieval cemeteries in Southern Germany was excavated near Kirchheim/Riess. From the rich archaeological finds on this cemetery it can be deduced that this site is a burial place of noble persons and warriors rather than

a burial place of a rural farming community (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 109).

The early medieval cemetery of Kirchheim/Riess dates from the 6th to the 8th century A.D. (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 108). This period of time can clearly be divided into 5 phases. From phase 3 onwards some individuals are buried in a small separated place in the south-eastern part of the cemetery. This small group of graves is regarded as a small burial site reserved for noble persons only. This is confirmed through the fact that in the whole of the cemetery this is the only place where one finds horse graves, as well as that the graves in this part of the cemetery are very well-furnished; in any case, they are not disturbed (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 104 f.). Many graves all over the cemetery have been disturbed, mainly as a result of secondary burials. Only in a few cases, especially in the separated noble burial place, grave robbery is probable (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 14 f.).

On this cemetery site eight individuals were found who definitely bear traces of sharp blows to the skull. In the case of another individual the impact of a sharp blow to the skull is highly probable. The graves in question are the following ones:

Grave No. 53 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 129):

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 20-30; two healed wounds on the frontal bone, caused by sharp blows to the skull;
- grave furnishing :
- one short sword (sax);
 - one iron buckle.

Grave No. 74 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 132):

disturbed; only skull and feet were found *in situ*;

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 20-30; two wounds on the right parietal bone, one on the left parietal bone; all three without any traces of a healing process; all three wounds caused by sharp blows to the skull;
- grave furnishings :
- two bronze spurs (found at the feet);
 - two bronze buckles (found at the feet);
 - one bronze belt mount (found at the feet);
 - one iron buckle;
 - one fragmentary iron knife.

Grave No. 183 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 148):

disturbed;

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 30-40; one healed wound on the occipital bone, caused by a sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishings :
- one small iron buckle.

Grave No. 184b (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 148.):

disturbed; only skull;

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 20-30; one healed wound on the frontal bone, caused by a sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishings :
- none.

Grave No. 234 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 158):

disturbed;

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 20-30; one healed wound on the frontal bone, caused by a sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishings :
- one fragmentary iron knife.

Grave No. 288 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 165):

disturbed; only skull found *in situ*;

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 30-40; one healed wound on the frontal bone, caused by sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishings :
- none.

Grave No. 410 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 188):

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 40-50; one healed wound on the frontal bone, caused by a sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishing:
- one long sword (spatha);
 - one short sword (sax);
 - one iron buckle;
 - one fragmentary iron knife;
 - one fragmentary bronze object.

Grave No. 439 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 194):

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 30-40; one healed wound on the left parietal bone, caused by a sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishings:
- one small bronze buckle.

Grave No. 454 (Neuffer-Müller 1983, 195):

anthropological diagnosis:

- male; 30-40; healed cutting mark on the frontal bone, probably stemming from a sharp blow to the skull;
- grave furnishings:
- one short sword (sax);
 - one iron buckle;
 - one fragmentary iron object;
 - one bone needle.

As borne out by the various grave-goods it is obvious that individuals of very different social rank

may have been affected by one or more sharp blows to the skull in early medieval times.

In contrast, normally only individuals who have been buried with weapons or riding equipment are regarded as warriors (Härke 1992, 213).

If, as shown particularly by grave No. 439, but very probably also by the graves No. 183, 184b, 234 and 288 in Kirchheim/Riess, the study of further archaeological data should reveal that sharp blows to the skull are found more often on persons buried without any weapon or riding equipment, this will lead to the question of what role the sword actually played in early medieval burial contexts in southern Germany. The question therefore is if the discovery of a sword in the grave shows who actually used a sword in real life or if the sword in the grave is rather an indication for of a certain social status of the buried individual. Härke (1992, 213, 225) for instance has studied similar archaeological and anthropological data from Anglo-Saxon cemeteries with comparable results. He has pointed out that there might have been a difference between the social warrior status on the one hand and the actual warrior function in real life on the other. The individual who was buried with a sword therefore would be the one maintaining the social warrior status. It can be suggested that something similar may also be valid in the case of early medieval southern Germany.

Bibliography

- BERG S.P. 1984: *Grundriß der Rechtsmedizin*, München.
- GELDHAUSER B., GUCKENHAN S. & HEUDORFER R. 1996: Hiebverletzungen und Trepanationen, in: A. CZARNETZKI (ed.), *Stumme Zeugen ihrer Leiden, Paläopathologische Befunde*, Tübingen, 183-205.
- HÄRKE H. 1992: *Angelsächsische Waffengräber des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts*, Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters, Beiheft 6, Köln.
- HERRMANN B., GRUPE G., HUMMEL S., PIEPENBRINCK P. & SCHUTKOWSKI H. 1990: *Prähistorische Anthropologie, Leitfaden der Feld- und Labormethoden*. Berlin/Heidelberg.
- MARESC W. & SPANN W. 1987: *Angewandte Gerichtsmedizin*, Wien/München.
- NEUFFER-MÜLLER C. 1983: *Der alamannische Adelsbestattungsplatz und die Reihengräberfelder von Kirchheim am Rieß (Ostalbkreis)*, Stuttgart.

Rolf Heudorfer
Osteologische Sammlung der Universität
Wilhelmstrasse 27
72074 Tübingen
Deutschland

Christopher Scull

A cemetery of the 7th and 8th centuries at St. Stephen's Lane/Butter Market, Ipswich

Introduction

Ipswich is situated at the head of the Orwell estuary in south-east Suffolk. It is one of the three or four major trading settlements (*emporia* or *wic* sites) of seventh- to ninth-century England for which there is good archaeological evidence, the others being Southampton, London and – less certainly – York (Morton 1992; Cowie & Whytehead 1989; Kemp 1996). Ipswich may be seen as the controlled port-of-entry for the East Anglian kingdom through which exchange with the continent was directed and controlled (Hodges 1982a, b).

The settlement at Ipswich was established in the first half of the seventh century, and ceramic evidence demonstrates exchange contacts with continental Europe from this earliest phase. The seventh- and eighth-century settlement covered c. 6 ha on the north bank of the Orwell. To the north of this was a contemporary cemetery, known from excavations at St. Stephen's Lane/Butter Market (hereafter Butter Market). From the middle of the seventh century Ipswich ware was produced on a large scale. By the 9th century the settlement had expanded to cover an area of c. 50 ha, with streets laid out to an orthogonal pattern to the north of the original settlement nucleus. The best evidence for this comes from the Butter Market itself where the abandoned cemetery was superseded by metalled streets whose frontages were developed with buildings (Wade 1988; 1993).

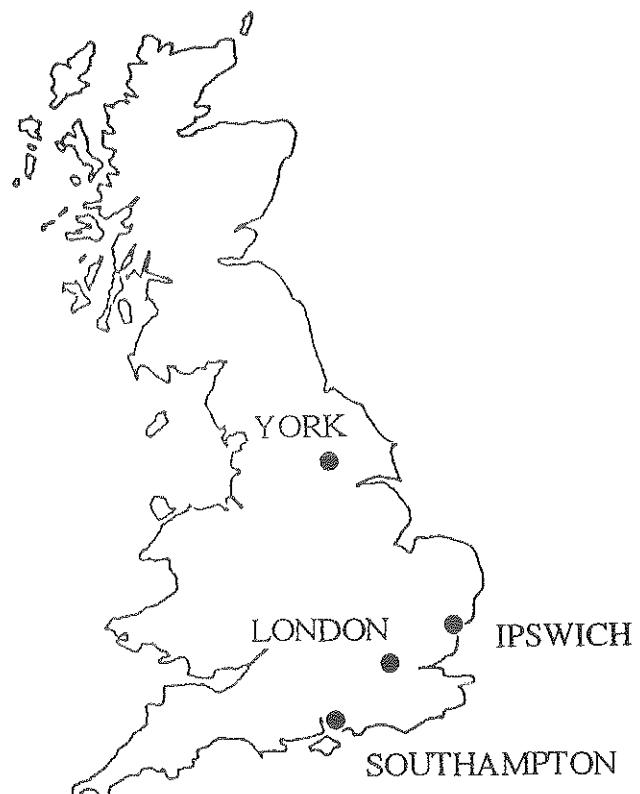
The Butter Market is a key site for our understanding of Anglo-Saxon Ipswich. Excavation in 1987-88 revealed a complex sequence of deposits from the seventh to the nineteenth centuries, of which the earliest phase was the cemetery. This is one of a handful of burial sites associated with the earliest phases of one of the Anglo-Saxon *emporia*, and the earliest to be extensively excavated (Scull forthcoming). The burials offer insights into the nature of the earliest urban or proto-urban community, and provide a *terminus post quem* for the subsequent expansion of the settlement; the cemetery also helps to define the topography of the earliest settlement and

its immediate environs. The site has a further significance in that chronological questions have prompted the use of high-precision radiocarbon dating, with results which are promising enough to suggest that the technique may be of wider value in the early medieval period.

This is a report on work in progress (Scull in prep.), and so the findings presented here must be treated as preliminary. However, it is felt that they are worth presenting as a contribution to both the mortuary and urban archaeology of the period.

The Cemetery

Seventy-seven inhumations were excavated from an area of c. 4600 sq m. However, there is no evidence that excavation established the boundaries of the cemetery, and large areas of the site had been



disturbed by features of the ninth century or later. It is probable that many burials had been destroyed by this later activity, and that the recorded graves represent a sample of not more than 50 per-cent of those originally within the excavated area. The soil is acid, and skeletal preservation is poor. However, soil conditions do favour the preservation of other organic materials either as pseudomorphs (soil stains) or in association with metal objects.

The sample size and conditions of preservation will constrain aspects of interpretation, but it is important to emphasize the positive: this is a substantial sample which is likely to represent accurately the length of time for which the cemetery was in use, and the range of burial practices and other cultural variables. Its survival in a town centre which has seen continuous activity for 1200 years may be considered remarkable.

Dating

A minority of furnished burials can be dated with fair precision by associated grave goods. This has been complemented by a programme of high-precision radiocarbon dating, which has the capacity to date burials to within a 40-year calibrated time span at the 95 per-cent confidence level. The full results are not yet available, but the preliminary indications are that the combination of artefact and radiocarbon dates will provide a robust and precise chronology.

The earliest burials belong to the first half of the seventh century, possibly as early as the second decade of the century, and the latest to the eighth century; the majority of dated graves are seventh-century. The date of the latest burial, and so for the final abandonment of the cemetery, depends upon the reconciliation of scientific dating and artefact evidence, and must wait upon completion of the radiocarbon dating programme.

The radiocarbon dates show that furnished and unfurnished burial were contemporary seventh-century traditions, and that it would be unsafe to draw any chronological conclusions from the absence of grave goods.

Burial Practice

No cremations are known. The majority of the inhumations were aligned broadly west-east, with a few south-north. The deceased were laid out in a variety of positions: supine extended, crouched and prone are represented. A majority of graves contained evidence of coffins or chambers, or some other

form of container or structure. Examples include a coffin made from a hollowed-out log, chamber-graves, and a boat burial. Annular ditches around some graves, including the boat burial, suggest that these had mounds raised over them.

Grave goods were recovered from thirty-two burials. The majority of burials with grave goods were poorly-furnished, often having only a knife, but a minority of graves were furnished more elaborately. In general the range of grave goods is what would be expected of a seventh- and eighth-century Anglo-Saxon cemetery, but a few burials contained continental material. The most striking of these was Grave 1306, a confined burial which contained a shield, two spears, a broad heavy sax in a scabbard with elaborate copper-alloy fittings, a copper-alloy belt suite, and two palm cups. The shield boss, sax and belt suite are all continental types, and the probability must be that this is the burial of an individual from Frankish or Alamannic territory. The grave can be dated securely to the period AD 640-670.

Just as most of grave goods can be considered typical of Anglo-Saxon burials at this time, so the other elements of burial practice are at home in contemporary East Anglia. It is also worth noting that although this is a Christian-period cemetery there is little or nothing in the burial practice which can be identified as specifically Christian.

Human Remains

Skeletal remains of fifty-four individuals were recovered, but the condition was poor: in most cases less than 25 per-cent of the skeleton survived. Of the individuals for which there is some osteological information, thirty-nine were adults and four juveniles. In addition to these, at least two infant burials have been inferred from the size of the grave pits. Of the adults, eight were male or probably male and four female or probably female; it should also prove possible to sex a number of the furnished burials for which there is insufficient osteological information on the basis of the grave goods.

Cemetery Morphology and Development

Given the nature of the sample any attempts at spatial analysis must be crude and severely limited. It is very unlikely that the available data will be able to sustain attempts to identify spatial patterning of biological or cultural variables. However, it does appear to be the case that there is no clustering of earlier or later graves, which may suggest that the cemetery

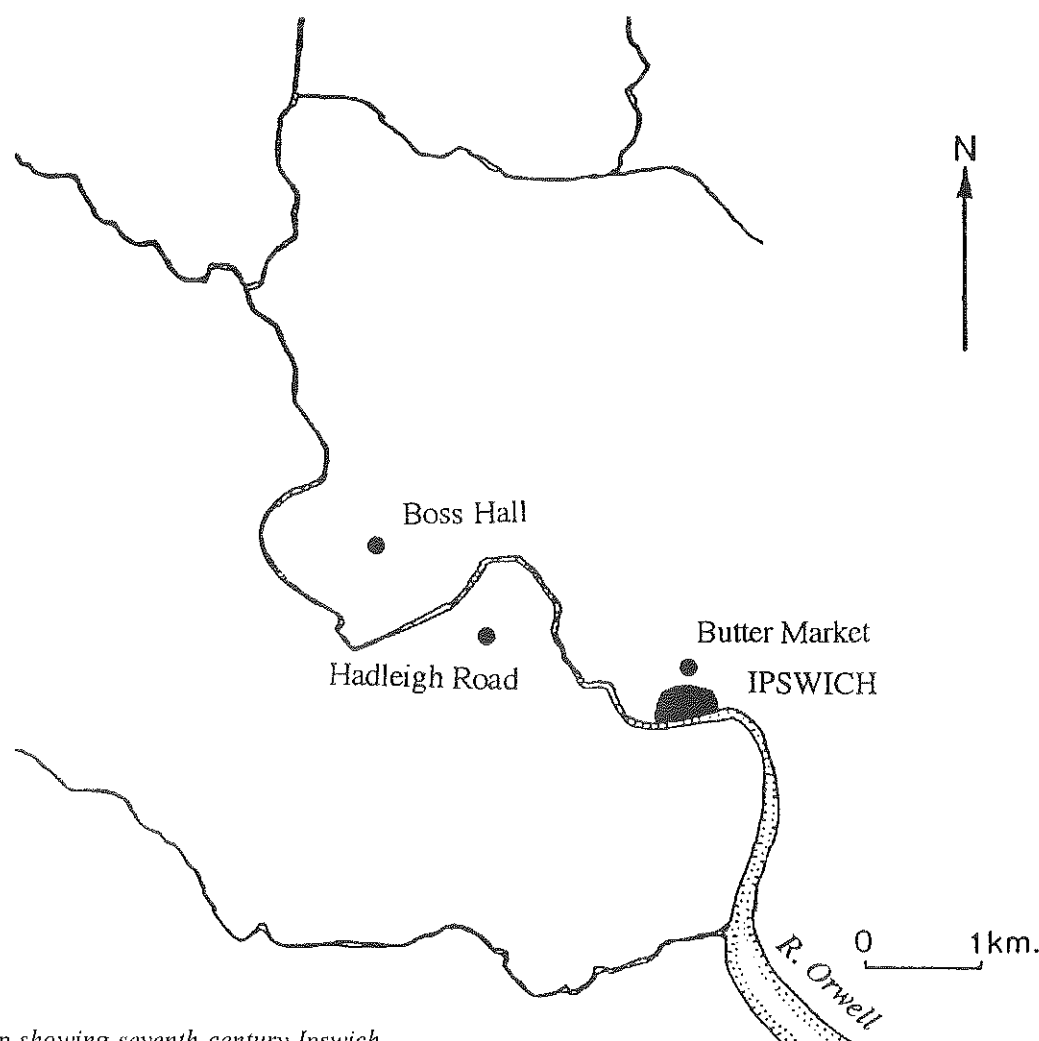


Fig. 1. - Location Map showing seventh-century Ipswich and other sites mentioned in the text.

was polyfocal, or developed stochastically rather than expanding outwards from a single early core.

Discussion

The Butter Market cemetery is contemporary with the earliest phase of settlement at Ipswich, and almost certainly served this community. Small numbers of contemporary graves are also known from other sites. This suggests that there may have been a zone of burials beyond the margins of the settlement, and that these may have included individual graves or small groups of burials as well as at least one large cemetery.

Inferences about population size and structure are limited by the small sample and poor bone preservation. The 2:1 ratio of men to women has also been observed in sites at Southampton, and has been used to argue for an unbalanced sex-structure perhaps related to the trading and manufacturing function of these settlements. However, in all cases the number of osteologically-sexed individuals is very small and

cannot be used safely to argue for a wider pattern. At present it would be unsafe to say more than that men and women, adults, children and infants are all represented in the cemetery population.

Estimates based upon the number of known graves give a figure for the contributing population of between eight and twelve individuals at any one time. The estimate of graves destroyed within the excavated area would allow this to be doubled, but even so this is barely consistent with a 6 ha settlement, even allowing for a transient or periodic population element such as might be expected at a trading site. However, these must be seen as minimum figures. As has already been noted, there are other contemporary burial sites and the full extent of the Butter Market cemetery is not known.

The variation in treatment and furnishing among the Butter Market burials suggests some concern to signal social identity or social differentiation. It is reasonable to infer some ranking in the contributing population, and in grave 1306 there is evidence for at least one high-status individual from the continent. At London, a higher-status burial at St. Martin-in-

the-Fields is contemporary with the earliest settlement, and although the evidence from Southampton is less easy to interpret the clearest indications of social differentiation come from burials associated with the earlier phases of the settlement (Scull forthcoming; Morton 1992; Hinton 1996). In so far as it is possible to make a simple generalisation this might be taken as consistent with the suggested role of elites in establishing and regulating the Anglo-Saxon *emporia* (Hodges 1982b). It is worth re-emphasizing, however, that there is little at the Butter Market which lies outside the known range of contemporary burial practice in southern England, and nothing in the cemetery itself to suggest an urban community. If it were not for its close proximity to the Ipswich settlement the cemetery would almost certainly be interpreted as the burial ground of a ranked rural community with some direct continental contacts. This touches upon the question of whether the seventh-century settlement at Ipswich should be considered as urban or proto-urban rather than as a special-purpose element of a rural settlement system.

Two other cemeteries in the immediate area should also be mentioned. At Boss Hall, 3 km west and north of the Butter Market, a richly-furnished female grave of the late seventh or early eighth century appears to represent the deliberate re-use of a sixth-century cemetery for a single burial. On the west bank of the River Gipping, 2 km from the Butter Market, is the Hadleigh Road cemetery. This appears to have been established in the sixth century, but remained in use into the middle or second half of the seventh century. The latest graves at Hadleigh Road are archaeologically contemporary with the earlier phases of burial at Butter Market. The precise relationship of these sites to the Ipswich settlement is not clear, but they indicate communities in its immediate hinterland and establish the existence of settlements in the immediate vicinity before the earliest known phase of activity at Ipswich itself.

Acknowledgements

The excavation of St. Stephen's Lane/Butter Market was undertaken by staff of Suffolk Archaeological Unit directed by Keith Wade and Tom Loader, and was funded by the developer of the site, Legal

and General Property, and by English Heritage. Analysis of the cemetery is being funded by English Heritage with assistance from the British Museum. I should like to thank Suffolk Archaeological Unit for the invitation to undertake analysis of the cemetery, and for their partnership and support, and to acknowledge my debt to colleagues within and without English Heritage who are contributing to the project: in particular Gordon Turner-Walker, Jacqui Watson, Kate Morton and Alex Bayliss.

References

- COWIE R. & WHYTEHEAD R. 1989: Lundenwic: the archaeological evidence for Middle Saxon London, *Antiquity* 241, 706-718
- HINTON D. 1996: *The Gold, Silver and other non-ferrous alloy Objects from Hamwic*, Stroud.
- HODGES R. 1982a: *Dark Age Economics: the Origins of Towns and Trade AD 600-1000*, London.
- HODGES R. 1982b: The evolution of gateway communities: their socio-economic implications, in: C. RENFREW & S. SHENNAN (eds.), *Ranking, Resource and Exchange. Aspects of early European Society*, Cambridge: University Press, 117-123.
- KEMP R. 1996: *Anglian Settlement at 46-54 Fishergate*, The Archaeology of York 7/1.
- MORTON A. 1992: *Excavations at Hamwic: Volume 1*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report, York, 84.
- SCULL C. forthcoming: Burials at emporia in England, in: D. HILL, R. COWIE & I. RIDDLER (eds.), *Wics and Emporia: the pre-Viking Trading Places of Europe*, Sheffield.
- SCULL C. in prep: *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries at Boss Hall and St. Stephen's Lane/Butter Market, Ipswich*.
- WADE K. 1988: Ipswich, in: R. HODGES & B. HOBLEY (eds.), *The Rebirth of Towns in the West AD 700-1050*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 68, London, 93-100.
- WADE K. 1993: The urbanisation of East Anglia: the Ipswich perspective, in: J. GARDINER (ed.), *Flatlands and Wetlands: current Themes in East Anglian Archaeology*, East Anglian Archaeology 50, 142-51.

Christopher Scull
English Heritage
23 Savile Row
London W1X 1AB
UK

Stephen T. Driscoll

Exploring the Christian Origins of Glasgow: Excavations at Glasgow Cathedral and Govan Old Parish Church

For the past two centuries Glasgow has been the largest and most influential city in Scotland and one of the great modern cities of Europe. Its growth has been firmly linked to the world economy and heavy industry, perhaps because the pace of development has been so relentless, Glaswegians have devoted less attention to their city's origins than have residents of less dynamic cities. Until recent years enquiry into Glasgow's early past has focused on the textual sources, which largely date from the early 12th century foundation of the See. These historical resources are considerable, because Glasgow was the principal see for South and West of Scotland. These records provide a full record of the high medieval development of the second most important bishopric in the kingdom after St Andrews. However, there is little in the documentation evidence relating to the early medieval kingdom of Strathclyde, which remained a separate polity until the 11th century. There is no contemporary historical evidence relating specifically to the immediate Glasgow/Govan area prior to the establishment of the See. As a consequence Glasgow appears to burst upon the historical stage fully formed, with no apparent early medieval precursor.

The archaeology of the Glasgow Cathedral and Govan Old parish church indicate that the story was more complex. There has long been an awareness that archaeology could provide access to these earlier periods, particularly with respect to the ecclesiastical development of Glasgow. From the middle of 19th century, Govan Old parish church was known to possess an outstanding collection of early medieval sculpture. In recent years the collection has been analysed and provided with an historical context (Ritchie 1994). This collection is now reckoned to date to the 9th-11th centuries, but every since its 'discovery' it has been appreciated as pre-dating the Cathedral (Radford 1967). Now Govan is firmly part of Glasgow's inner city, but it lies 5 km to the West of and on the opposite side of the river Clyde from the medieval burgh (town) of Glasgow. In fact, until the 19th century Govan lay well outside of Glasgow city. Moreover, the earliest loose fragments of sculpted

and painted masonry from the Cathedral were recognised as being of 12th century date (Radford & Stones 1964). So although Govan has been recognised as a predecessor of the Cathedral, the relationship has never been explored in detail. Despite the recognised archaeological potential of these two church sites, surprisingly little archaeological effort has been directed towards investigating their history. In recent years a number of excavations have been conducted for a variety of reasons, which now provide the basis for a much more complete account of Glasgow's ecclesiastical history.

In the case of Glasgow, ecclesiastical history is not a peripheral consideration, because the Cathedral was the pivotal force in the growth and development of the medieval burgh. Glasgow sits on the upper navigable reaches of the river Clyde, which served as the main sea route from the Irish Sea into west central Scotland. Glasgow is well situated with respect to overland routes, centres of agricultural production and sea borne communications. Throughout the middle ages the benefits of the position fell to the bishops of Glasgow, who not only had a vast diocese, containing many parishes, but also enjoyed the financial privileges of the burgh, which were usually reserved for the crown.

By any measure Glasgow must be regarded as one of the great churches of Scotland: it possessed the largest non-monastic chapter, the cult of St. Kentigern (also known as Mungo) was one of the most popular and its bishops frequently held the highest royal offices. The cathedral thus provided the stable economic presence which allowed the burgh to develop into the most populous and important urban community in West Scotland. Although this growth was relatively late in European terms, and the scale of the international commerce relatively modest by comparison with the Scottish North Sea ports (Edinburgh, Berwick & Dundee), the 12th to 15th centuries should be regarded as one of the three great eras of the city. (The other two were as an American port trading in tobacco and sugar during in the 17th and 18th centuries and as an Industrial powerhouse from

the mid-19th to the early 20th century.) Among the most celebrated of the industrial products of the third era were those associated with shipbuilding and naval engineering. The centre of this industry grew up around the by now obscure riverside village of Govan. History thus appeared to have returned its attention to the ancient ecclesiastical centre of Govan.

Whether we view this process cyclically or not, the key unexplained moment concerns the shift of the ecclesiastical and political centre of gravity from Govan to Glasgow. The arguments I will offer to explain this shift derive in large part from the experience of working on these two sites and from the results of the recent excavations. Until these excavations this shift was a matter we could only speculate about and although we are still some distance from comprehending the whole picture, our speculation is now better informed.

Govan Old parish church occupies an oval churchyard adjacent to the Clyde opposite the confluence with its tributary the river Kelvin (see figure 1). An important ford (later a ferry crossing) was located a few hundred metres to the East of the church and it was around this crossing place that the medieval village was gathered. The raised, oval churchyard has long attracted attention of antiquarians, because in the Celtic world such enclosures are a good indicator of an ancient church site. These are frequently assumed, on the basis of their boundary form alone, to represent early Christian (6th-9th centuries), even monastic, foundations. The past 100 years have been particularly rough on the archaeological fabric of Govan; the shipyards which engulfed the Govan waterfront ruthlessly cleared away all the standing traces of early Govan, apart from the churchyard. The visible ancient features which survive today are all found within the churchyard itself.

Without question the most significant survival is the collection of 31 sculpted stones high crosses and a monolithic reliquary sarcophagus and, most numerous, the grave markers. These include 5 'hogback' stones and 21 recumbent slabs decorated with interlace crosses, 10 more recumbent slabs have been lost. In total at least 41 stones are known from the site, which makes it the third largest collection in Scotland after Iona and St Andrews. The earliest of the Govan sculpture is a hogback grave stone, which dates to the late 9th century. Hogback-shaped stones are a monument type which is unique to the areas of Viking settlement in Britain. The Govan hogbacks have affinities with those characteristic of Cumbria in NW England, but are larger. Indeed they are the largest known hogbacks.

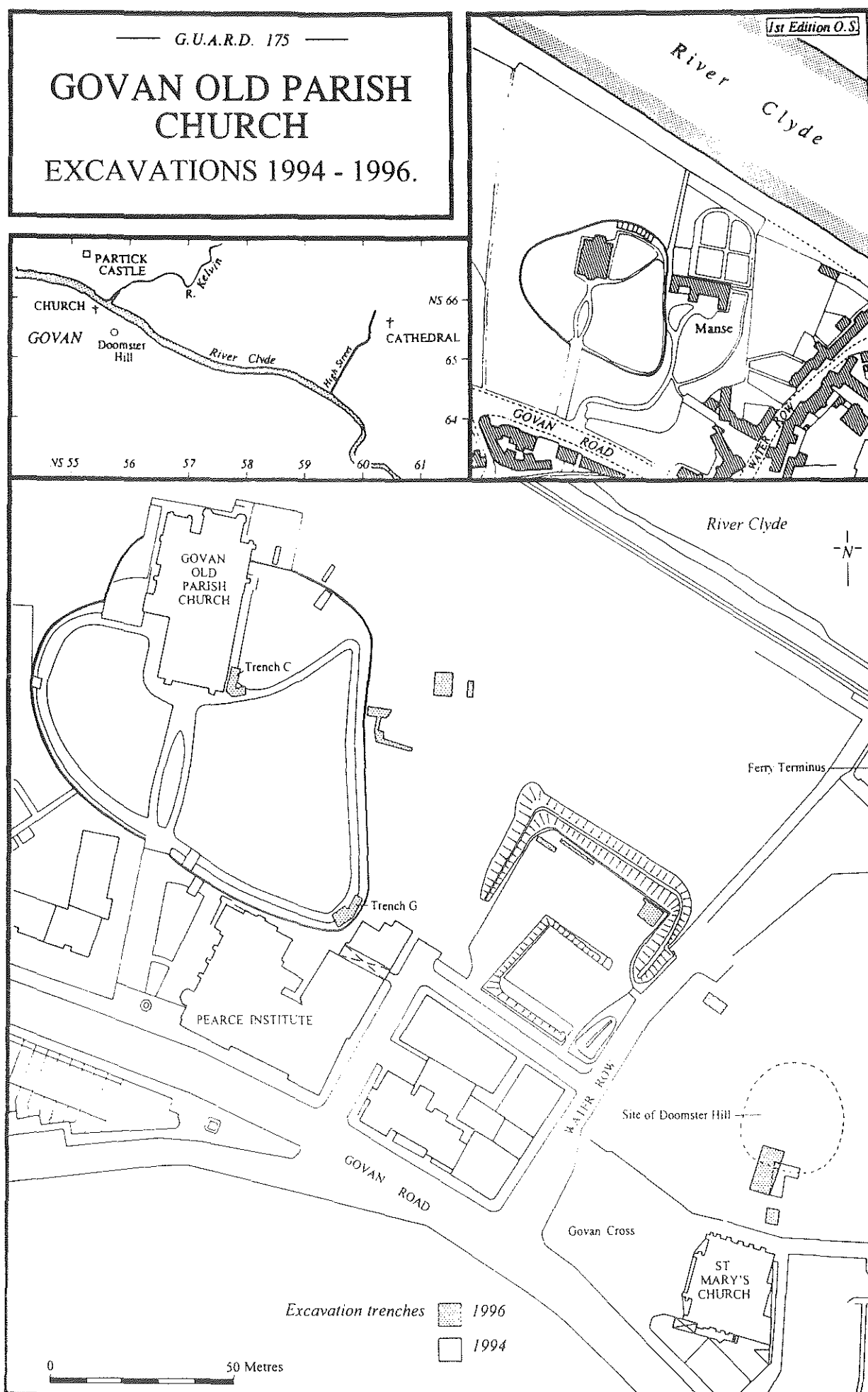
Most of the crosses are broken and worn, but the presence of 4 monumental crosses is exceptional for

this part of the country, where single crosses are much more common. Even more exceptional is the monolithic sarcophagus decorated with interlace panels, various beasts and a mounted warrior (see figure 2). The all-over decorative treatment suggests that this was a reliquary, rather than a tomb. An appropriate parallel is provided by the carved stone reliquary known as the St Andrews Sarcophagus, which is also a reliquary and of Pictish date (c. AD 800).

The recumbent grave stones are the most numerous type of monument, they are also the latest. Some date to the 11th century. Each of these stones is unique, but they share a common form: a rectangular, grave-sized slab bears an interlace cross. The style of interlace seen on some of the recumbent crosses exhibits Norse influence. This is without question the largest number of 10th-11th century collection of grave stones in the country. Moreover, they are the most ornate grave stones known from the period. Because of their high level of decoration it has been argued that these stones represent memorials to members of the Strathclyde nobility. Indeed an explicit link has been drawn between the grave stones, the relics of St Constantine presumably housed in the sarcophagus, and the church site to suggest that Govan represented the centre of saintly cult patronised by the Strathclyde royal dynasty.

Pre-modern Govan had two social foci marked by topographical features. The key surviving feature is the churchyard, which is one of the largest known curvilinear plan churchyards in Scotland. Now, the churchyard is dominated by a large 19th century Gothic revival church, but this is the third church to have been built in post-medieval times. Fortunately the influence of Presbyterian liturgical practice led to the adoption of a North-South orientation, which left the position of the earlier church standing to the East of the existing building. The topographical feature which marked the other social focus of Govan has not survived industrialisation. Adjacent to the crossing place of the river, there used to stand a large, artificial mound (45 m diameter by 5 m high), known as the Doomster hill. The hill was levelled in the late 19th century, but a few key details survive which help to indicate its nature. The most detailed drawing of it to survive shows that the profile of the hill had a flat top and a distinct step mid-way up the slope. When a water tank was inserted into the mound in the mid-19th century, human bones and fragments of timber were encountered near the centre of the mound. Although there is no evidence to allow us to estimate

Fig. 1. - *Plan of churchyard of Govan showing locations of excavations of 1994-96.*



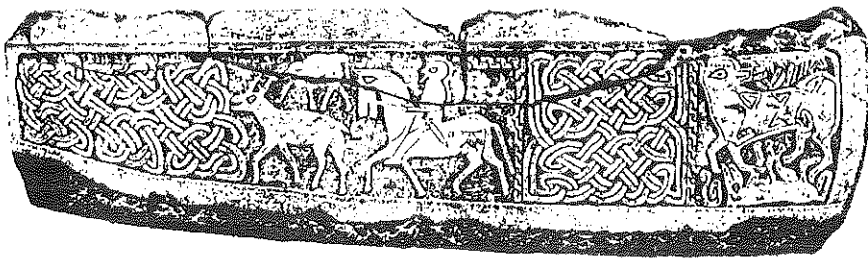
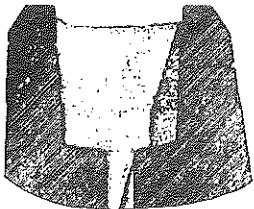
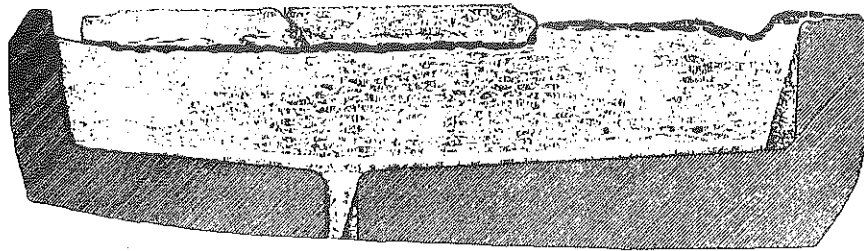
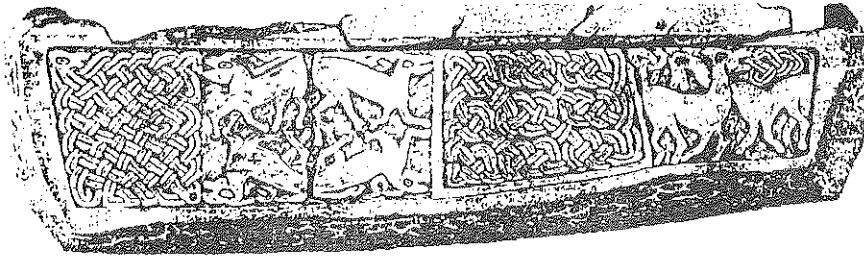


Fig. 2. - The Govan Sarcophagus as recorded by P. McGregor Chalmers (1902).



the age of this burial (if that is what it was), but the construction of a timber tomb would be unprecedented in Scotland. On the other hand such burial mounds are not uncommon in the Scandinavian world.

Despite the evidence of early engravings, some would maintain that this mound represents the motte of an undocumented earthwork castle. This, however, is a minority opinion and the most widely accepted view is that the mound represents a court hill. Open air court sites, which are widely known throughout early medieval Scotland, on occasion are known to have reused prehistoric burial mounds. Prominence and antiquity seem to have been influential factors in the selection of such sites. The stepped form of the Doomster Hill is exceptional, however, and invites comparison with the Tynwald on the Isle of Man, the

stepped mound where the Manx Parliament meets annually.

The wider setting of the Govan, as represented by its pre-modern parish is equally significant. Govan was exceptionally large for a lowland parish. The Pre-Reformation parish occupied an area about 10 km by 6 km spanning both sides of the Clyde. Within this Minster-sized parish was Partick castle owned by the bishop of Glasgow, which was originally royal demesne. Taken together the collection of grave stones, the large church yard, the court hill, and the associated royal estate suggest that Govan was more than a popular cemetery. It suggests that Govan was a pre-eminent administrative and ceremonial centre of the Kingdom of Strathclyde. A plausible context for its late 9th century emergence is provided by the

events of 870 AD. In that year the emblematic centre of the kingdom, Dumbarton ('fort of the Britons') was besieged and destroyed by Vikings (Alcock & Alcock 1990). It never appears to have recovered its former position and may well have been replaced by Govan.

It was against a background of renewed interest in Govan expressed by scholars (see Ritchie 1994) and by the City of Glasgow Planning Department that a series of three trial excavations have been conducted since 1994 (Cullen & Driscoll 1995, Driscoll & Will 1996, Driscoll & Will 1997). These excavations were intended to evaluate the survival of archaeological features in and around the churchyard and at the site of the Doomster Hill. Although necessarily limited in scale and duration a number of significant discoveries have been made. Perhaps the most important discovery has been that substantial archaeological structures and deposits survive in a number of places in the churchyard. Even in their partially investigated state the structural remains discovered in the trial excavations invite a reassessment of the organisation of Govan and its historical significance. The trial trenching efforts can be grouped into three general areas: the perimeter of the churchyard inside and out; the site of the church; and Doomster Hill.

The churchyard is not oval or round, rather it is pear-shaped coming to a point in the south-east. This shape has long bothered archaeologists who questioned the antiquity or integrity of the eastern boundary. Trenches located on the South and East sides of the churchyard have revealed the presence of massive ditch (up to 4 m wide and 2m deep) running just outside the existing boundary wall. This establishes the antiquity of the existing enclosure, although close dating evidence was not recovered. The modern churchyard wall occupies the position of the upcast bank which would have formed an ecclesiastical *vallum*. Trenches on the North side could not confirm the presence of a ditch, but the industrial disturbance here was extensive, and in any case the riverside of the ecclesiastic precinct may not have been marked by a ditch. At two places within the boundary, traces of hearths and evidence of light industrial activity were found, including the working of shale. At the south-east 'point', the excavation revealed a metalled road surface which seems to mark the position of the original entrance, because it was recognised that the road was aligned on a small lane leading directly towards the site of the Doomster Hill.

Immediately to the East of the existing church massive dry-stone foundations were discovered some 2 m below the existing ground surface. These footing seem to represent the south-west corner of a building on the same alignment as the existing church. Too

little of this wall has been revealed to allow us to observe that they appear to be the foundations for a timber-built church. There were no traces of mortar with this structure. There was no close dating evidence for these foundations, but since churches built of mortar and dressed stone become common after the 12th century, it seems reasonable to propose that this building was built earlier. How much earlier will have to await the results of radiocarbon dates from two oriented burials discovered below these foundations. If nothing else these burials confirm that this was indeed a church.

Access to the site of the Doomster Hill was much more problematic. Not only over 2 m of modern rubble accumulated above the early 19th century ground level, but the exact location of the mound was uncertain. However the construction ditch of the Doomster Hill was so massive that it was eventually located, but despite two separate excavations we were only able to excavate a section through the ditch and failed to expose its full width or trace its course. The scale of the ditch (at least 8 m wide and over 2 m deep) would seem about right given the reported size of the mound. It proved impossible to investigate the site of the mound itself, but a slight suggestion of a remnant of the mound suggests that its base may yet survive. The key result of this excavation was to locate the mound and determine its artificial origins.

In summary these discoveries coupled with the previously known material draw attention to the integrated nature of the church with its cult and high status burial ground, the open air court site of the Doomster Hill and the royal estate of Partick on the North bank. What they suggest is that Govan housed a major ecclesiastical establishment (we cannot yet say whether it was monastic), but beyond that they suggest that it was a major, if not the major, ceremonial centre for the kings who ruled Strathclyde in the 9th to 11th centuries. The proximity to the Doomster Hill further suggests that these ceremonies were associated with the administrative aspects of lordship. Not much is known of the kingdom of Strathclyde in these centuries, apart from the disastrous assault on Dumbarton by Irish Sea Vikings. Given the coherence of the structures seen at Govan we are bound to wonder whether Govan was planned. If so then many of the elements from which the kingdom sought to redefine itself have a conspicuous Norse character.

Meanwhile in the East of the country, the Kings of the Scots used 10th and 11th centuries to consolidate their power and to begin to expand. The kingdom of Strathclyde was finally subsumed into Scotland in the late 11th century. By the 12th the administrative apparatus of the Scottish kings became more visible

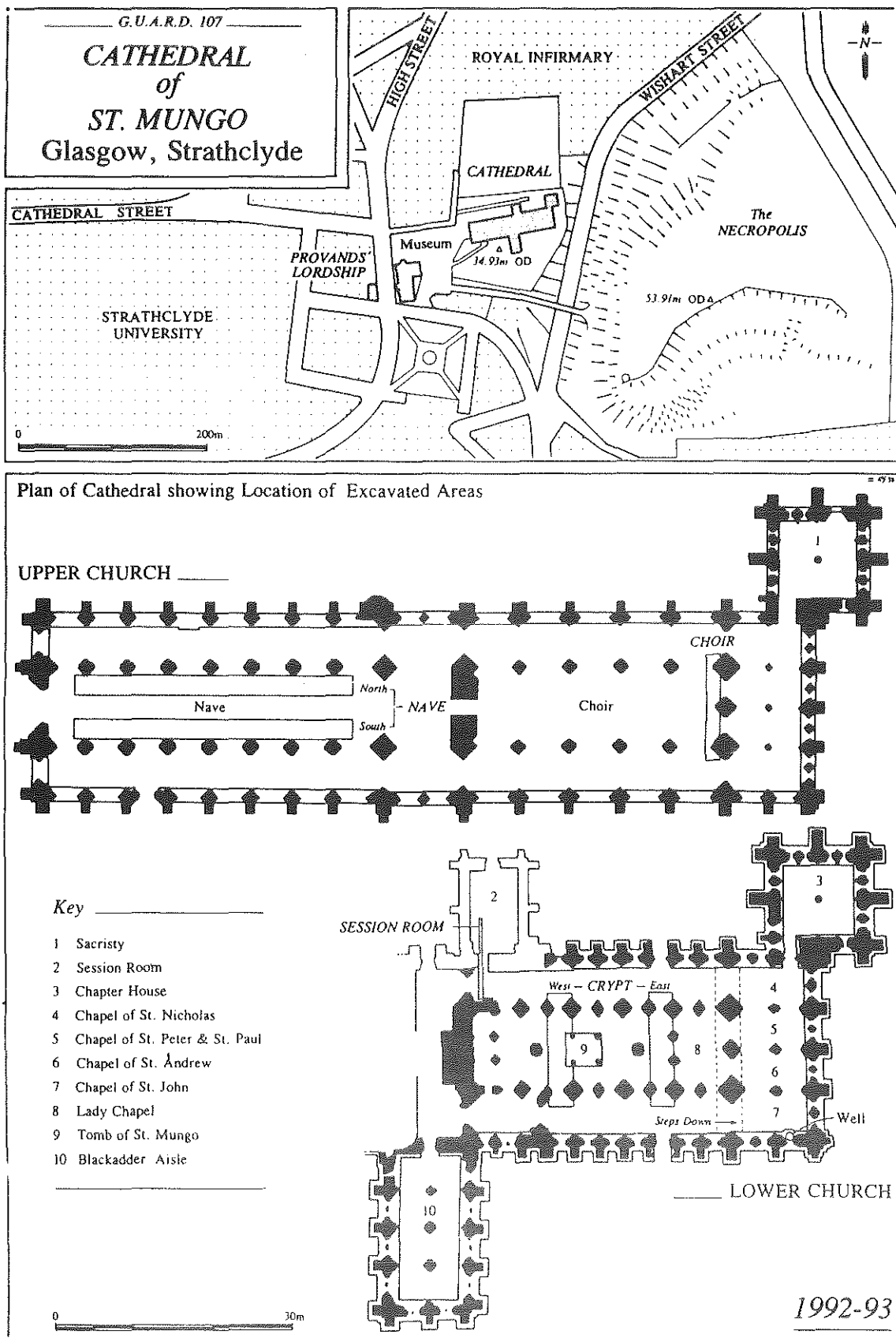


Fig. 3. - Plan of Glasgow Cathedral showing the location of the excavations of 1992-93.

with the proliferation of charters, but their natural ambitions were perhaps best exemplified by the formal establishment of a diocesan system. The key stage in this process of extending the authority of the

Scottish kings beyond their traditional territory was the establishment of Glasgow Cathedral in 1114x1118, by David I. Prior to coming to the crown David had ruled Strathclyde and Cumbria. He therefore knew

the region well and was aware of its political and ideological condition. The establishment of a new cathedral and the promotion of a different patron saint need to be seen in the context of the effective extension of Scottish power into areas they never previously ruled.

Glasgow Cathedral became the main pilgrimage site for the cult of St Kentigern whose obit places his activity in the late 6th early 7th century (Macquarrie 1986). Kentigern is traditionally said to have come westwards from Fife, in the heart of the kingdom of the Scots, to Strathclyde where he founded a religious community at the site later occupied by Glasgow cathedral. In the 12th century *Vitae* of Kentigern he is described as a bishop, but nothing is known of his episcopacy that is not contained in the *Vitae*. Indeed, it seems unlikely that a proper bishopric can have existed at that stage. Prior to the foundation of Glasgow, Kentigern seems to have been a rather neglected and obscure figure. This background of Kentigern may have appealed to David I, because his cult was traditionally strong in Strathclyde, but his noble genealogy was firmly eastern. In this respect Kentigern's origins mirrored those of the Scottish crown which was extending their authority westward from their power base in the East.

The excavations at Glasgow Cathedral were undertaken as part of a programme of improvements to the Cathedral sponsored by Historic Scotland (Scotland's government heritage agency). The requirements of the programme allowed for large scale excavations in the nave and the crypt (Driscoll 1992). It was expected that traces of the two 12th century cathedrals which predate the existing building would be encountered. It was also hoped that some light might be shed on the tradition that the Cathedral was built over the burial place of Kentigern. (see figure 3).

Substantial *in situ* remains of both early cathedrals were encountered, but evidence relating to the burial place of Kentigern was less clear. Among the earliest feature on the site was an oriented burial. This lay stratified under part of the earliest 12th century cathedral and has yielded a radiocarbon date of cal AD 677-860 (GU-4747). This points to the development of a cemetery (presumably with a church) near to the traditional location of Kentigern's burial place within in a few generations of his death. Unfortunately the excavations adjacent to the existing shrine to Kentigern's burial place yielded no evidence of any early features or architectural structure. This is not too surprising given the scale of the later building works which would certainly have swept away earlier traces. Significantly there is no known evidence for activity on the site contemporary with the period of activity represented by the Govan sculpture.

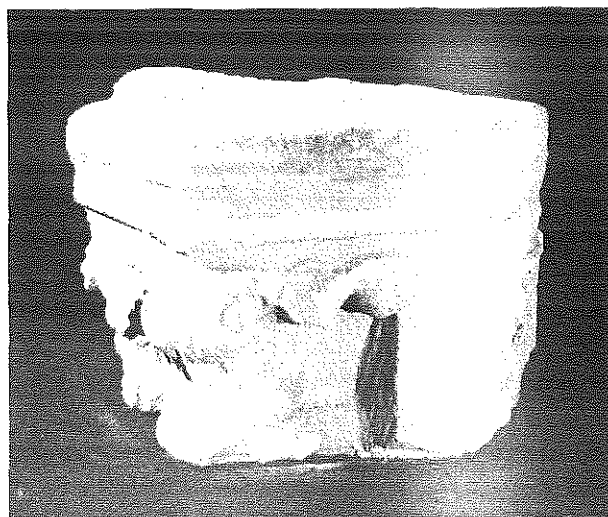


Fig. 4. - A capital from the second, late 12th century cathedral which was discovered reused in the foundations of the 13th century structure (photo by Historic Scotland, Crown copyright reserved).

The development of the cathedral required almost constant building work from the establishment of the See by David I until the Wars of Independence (with England) imposed a hiatus in the late 13th century. Three main phases of building are known historically and have been identified architecturally (Fawcett 1990) and archaeologically. The foundations of the west front of the first cathedral, consecrated in 1136, were encountered in the third bay of the nave to the west of the crossing. They provide little indication of the form of this church, other than suggesting that it was a relatively modest building (perhaps on the order of 35 m long). Column drums found reused in the fabric of the second cathedral could have come either from aisles or, perhaps from a crypt.

In suggesting the presence of an early crypt, we are anticipating the outstanding features of the existing cathedral: its magnificent crypt. The small surviving fragment of the fabric of the second cathedral, consecrated 1197, clearly does come from a crypt of some sophistication. Indeed it probably represents part of a cruciform plan crypt which embraced the area now designated as Kentigern's tomb. The walls of the nave are massive, over 4 m thick suggesting an aisled nave. Overall this church may have been designed to be about 50 m in length. This second cathedral is contemporary with the composition and dissemination of the *Vitae* of Kentigern, which were both the literary manifestation of a popular cult and the vehicle for attracting more pilgrims. As with the miracles the church was designed to impress pilgrims and attract more.

From the surviving *in situ* fragments and those recovered during the excavation, it is clear that the

second cathedral was one of the most ambitious churches in 12th century Scotland. A number of carved architectural fragments shows that the masonry was of a high standard (see figure 4). In addition over two dozen fragments of painted masonry were also recovered, which belong to the second cathedral. Evidence of painting at this date rarely survives in Scotland, but here it seems that paint was used to accentuate key architectural features and spaces. A number of fragments come from a figurative panel which may have formed part of the backdrop to the shrine to Kentigern. Although this second cathedral was consecrated in 1197, the excavations show that it was never completed. The walls of the nave were left unfinished and no foundations were ever laid for the west front.

It would seem that the popularity of the cult of Kentigern, coupled with the increasing political stature of the bishops, led to the start of a new, even larger cathedral before the second one could be completed. This final building campaign started around 1200 and was to carry on for most of the 13th century. The most spectacular achievement was the East end which dates to the mid-13th century and was built on two levels. Because the cathedral is built on a slope, the two level scheme allows the crypt to stand entirely above ground. In the crypt windows on all sides illuminate a forest of columns, which supports the choir and serve to define the important devotional and liturgical spaces. On both levels broad aisles and an ambulatory lead the pilgrim to the shrines, relics and chapels of the cathedral. Without question the crypt is one of the most distinguished accomplishments of Scottish Gothic architecture.

In summary, the excavations reveal the relentless development of the cathedral in the 12th and 13th century. The liturgical space created at Glasgow was as complex as that found in most of the great churches of Europe for intricacy and visual appeal was never surpassed in Scotland. The cathedral with its chapter, pilgrims and eventually university, became the focus of an important burgh which developed gradually throughout the middle ages. However, it seems clear from the excavations discussed here along with others undertaken at the Bishop's palace and elsewhere in the burgh that prior to the 12th century, Glasgow was a place of little consequence. The absence of early medieval sculpture, or any other evidence dating to the 9th to 11th centuries, suggests that when the See was established in the early 12th century Glasgow possessed a modest church, probably timber built which served a small rural population and was dedicated to a scarcely remembered British Dark Age saint.

The contrast with 9th to 11th century Govan could not be starker. Govan church was the centre of a pros-

perous, probably royally sponsored, cult and cemetery, which was one axis of a ceremonial and administrative complex. At first glance Govan, with its royal associations would seem to have been the natural location to house the new See for south-west Scotland. However on reflection it would seem that it was specifically those royal associations which ruled Govan out. Moreover and the relative insignificance of Kentigern's church at Glasgow may have contributed to its selection. Glasgow's lack of history and prestige were assets, while Govan's status and importance were a liability. Because the kings or kin of kings buried at Govan were those of the annexed kingdom of Strathclyde and because devotions focused on the patron saint of the deposed ruling dynasty, Govan was an impossible choice for the new See. David I appears to have realised that if the new Cathedral was to serve the interests of the greater Scottish kingdom, a new or at least obscure foundation was preferable to endorsing Govan as the political centre of Strathclyde. In this respect the obscurity of Kentigern was a positive blessing since this allowed for the development of a cult in the service of the bishop and the state. The cathedral thus stands as the physical manifestation of devotion to St Kentigern and of the political success enjoyed by the 12th and 13th century kings of Scots. It is a monument to the success of creating the Scottish nation, while Govan is a reminder of the regional kingdoms from which it was fashioned.

Acknowledgements

Although these excavations were not conceived of as part of a unified project, I have come to think of them as being linked because they seem to work together to illuminate a murky period. I am grateful to Historic Scotland for allowing me to excavate in Glasgow Cathedral and particularly to Dr. Richard Fawcett, who has supervised the project and provided continuous support. The work at Govan has been sponsored by the City of Glasgow Planning Department, with the encouragement and blessing of Revd T Davidson Kelly. I owe a special thanks to my colleagues in the Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division, who conducted the fieldwork.

References

- ALCOCK, L. & E.A. 1990: Reconnaissance excavations on Early Historic fortifications and other royal sites in Scotland, 1974-84: 4. Excavations at Alt Clut, Clyde Rock, Strathclyde 1974-75, *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* 120, 95-149.
- CHALMERS P.M. 1902: *The Govan Sarcophagus. The Shrine of S. Constantine*, Glasgow.

- CULLEN I. & DRISCOLL S.T. 1995: *Excavations at Govan Old Parish Church 1994*, GUARD Report 175.1, Glasgow University.
- DRISCOLL S.T. 1992: Excavations at Glasgow Cathedral: a preliminary report on the discoveries made in 1992-93, *Glasgow Archaeol. J.* 17, 1991-92, 63-76.
- DRISCOLL S.T. & WILL R.S. 1996: *Water Row, Govan*, GUARD Report 175.2, Glasgow University.
- DRISCOLL S.T. & WILL R.S. 1997: *Govan Old Parish Church and Water Row*, GUARD Report 175.3, Glasgow University.
- FAWCETT R. 1990: Glasgow Cathedral in: E. WILLIAMSON *et al.* (eds.), *The Buildings of Scotland: Glasgow*, London, 108-153.
- MACQUARRIE A. 1986: The career of St Kentigern of Glasgow: *Vitae, Lectiones*, and glimpses of fact, *Innes Rev.* 37, 3-24.
- RADFORD C.A.R. 1967: The early Christian monuments of Govan and Inchinnan, *Trans. Glasgow Archaeol. Soc.* 15 (4), 173-188.
- RADFORD C.A.R. & STONES E.L.G. 1964: The remains of the Cathedral of Bishop Jocelin at Glasgow (c.1197), *The Antiquaries J.* 44, 220-232.
- RITCHIE A. (ed.) 1994: *Govan and its Early Medieval Sculpture*, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

Stephen T. Driscoll
Department of Archaeology
University of Glasgow
10 The Square
Glasgow G12 8QQ
Scotland

Michael Wyss

Saint-Denis (France): Du mausolée hypothétique du Bas-Empire à l'ensemble basilical carolingien

Située à 9 km au nord de Paris (fig. 1), l'abbaye de Saint-Denis doit son prestige à la possession des reliques de Dionysius (saint Denis), l'évangéliste des *Parisii* qui, vers le milieu du III^e s., aurait subi le martyre par le glaive. Selon la recherche actuelle, le culte du saint remonterait à la Paix de l'Eglise (312-380). Le fait est que la tombe était déjà l'objet de vénération lorsque, vers 475, Geneviève, une Parisienne de rang social élevé, fit construire une basilique. Vers la fin du VI^e s., Gégoire de Tours décrit l'édifice qui abritait la tombe richement décorée. L'auteur mentionne également l'existence de gardiens (*custodes*) établis aux abords du sanctuaire.

Parmi les rois mérovingiens, Dagobert I^{er} fut le principal bienfaiteur de Saint-Denis. La "Chronique de Frédégaire" certifie que le roi fit exécuter dans l'édifice d'importants travaux d'ornementation. La "Vie de saint Eloi" précise la nature des travaux commandés à l'orfèvre, futur évêque de Noyon. Pressentant la basilique pour accueillir sa dépouille, Dagobert († 639) tenta d'imposer à la communauté de clercs la psalmodie perpétuelle selon le modèle de Saint-Maurice d'Agaune.

A leur tour, plusieurs souverains carolingiens adoptèrent Saint-Denis pour nécropole: Charles Martel († 741), Pépin le Bref († 768), Bertrade († 783), Charles le Chauve († 877). Puis la tradition s'établit de manière quasi ininterrompue à partir des Robertiens: Eudes († 898) et des Capétiens: Hugues Capet († 996), Robert le Pieux († 1031).

En 775, l'abbé Fulrad consacra une nouvelle basilique. Vers 800, Charlemagne la dota à l'ouest d'un *augmentum* édifié sur la tombe de Pépin située *ante limina* de la basilique et, en 832, l'abbé Hilduin l'agrandit à l'est par une chapelle consacrée à la Vierge. L'église fut décrite en 799 dans un texte apparemment inspiré de la description de la basilique Saint-Martin par Grégoire de Tours. Le texte relève les dimensions de l'édifice et dénombre ses composantes: colonnes, portes, fenêtres, lampes. A ses abords, la description cite d'autres églises et des portiques; ces derniers sont à mettre en rapport avec l'atrium connu par des textes antérieurs. Ainsi, en

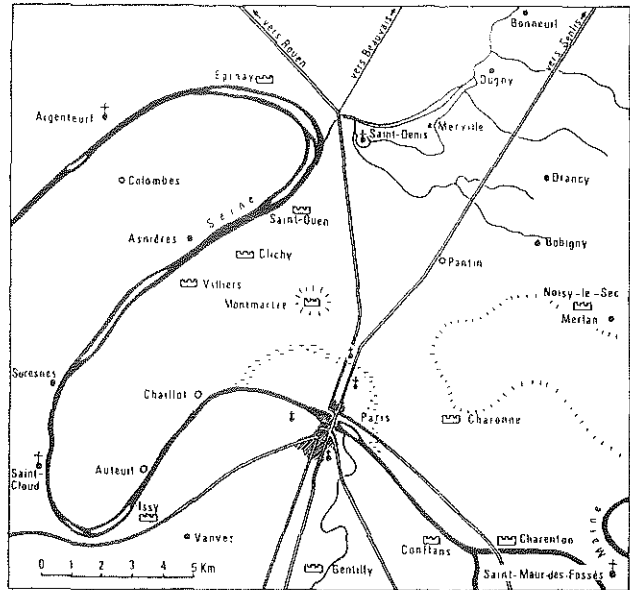


Fig. 1. - Localisation de Saint-Denis au haut Moyen Age (Doc. UASD)

626 ou 627, lors du concile de Clichy, quarante-deux évêques se réunissent en une église dédiée à la Vierge située dans l'atrium de Saint-Denis.

En ce qui concerne le monastère, les sources mentionnent les bâtiments principaux (réfectoire, dortoir, vestiaire, salle chauffée, cuisine, noviciat, bains, ateliers, boulangerie, celliers) sans faire état de leur

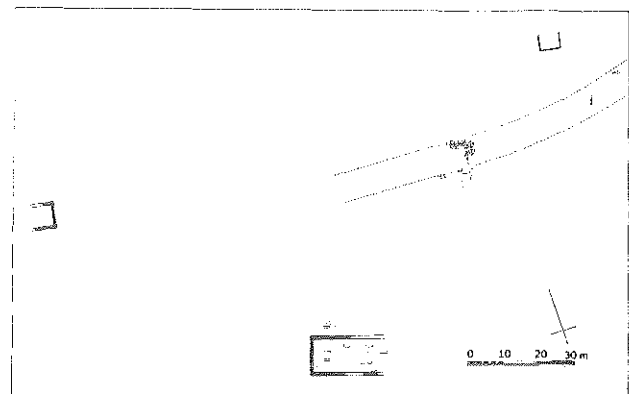


Fig. 2. - Saint-Denis au Bas-Empire, état des connaissances actuelles (Doc. UASD)

organisation spatiale. Sur le site, la présence d'un palais, avant 800, paraît également assurée.

Dès le XIX^e s., le sous-sol de la basilique cathédrale a fait l'objet de recherches sporadiques, mais seul Sumner McK Crosby entreprit, à partir de 1938, des fouilles systématiques dans le but d'étudier les édifices antérieurs. Parallèlement, des investigations ont porté, jusqu'en 1976, sur des tombes à riche mobilier de la nécropole royale.

Depuis 1973, la rénovation du centre-ville de Saint-Denis a été mise à profit par une équipe d'archéologues pour mener une vaste investigation sur le bourg monastique. La fouille en sauvetage programmée effectuée sur 13,5 hectares a porté principalement sur les abords septentrionaux de la basilique. La publication de ces recherches, en cours, a commencé par une étude approfondie de la topographie du site dans sa globalité.¹

Au point de vue archéologique, l'occupation du site débute au Bas-Empire comme en témoigne, notamment, la présence de tessons de sigillée d'Argonne des IV^e et V^e s. De l'agglomération proprement dite, la fouille n'a permis d'identifier que deux bâtiments annexes d'un établissement sans doute plus vaste (fig. 2). L'architecture de ces constructions relève de la tradition antique: maçonneries liées au mortier, enduits peints et mortier de tuileau. Les deux bâtiments, distants l'un de l'autre d'un peu plus de 140 m, semblent être disposés par rapport à une chaussée du Ves. orientée est-ouest. Des sépultures de même époque ont été reconnues au sud de cette voie en bordure de la chaussée. Sur le site de la basilique, la nécropole débute également au Bas-Empire. Les tombes à inhumations sont soit en sarcophage de pierre, soit en cercueil cloué, soit en pleine terre. Si les exemples de dépôt funéraire (vaisselle et pièces de monnaie) de tradition gallo-romaine sont rares, il faut noter la présence d'une fibule cruciforme propre aux fonctionnaires et aux militaires romains. Quant à la question de la basilique mérovingienne, elle reste encore débattue. Le plus ancien vestige identifié à ce jour dans le sous-sol de la basilique – une fondation comportant une assise de gros blocs de réemploi d'origine antique – correspond à un édifice de plan rectangulaire (9 m sur au moins 20 m dans-oeuvre). Cet édifice est agrandi dans le courant du VI^e s. pour accueillir les tombes des membres de l'aristocratie franque (tombe de la reine Arégonde, épouse de Clotaire I^{er}).

Aux abords de la basilique, l'occupation se maintient mais l'aspect et l'organisation de l'espace se modifient fondamentalement. Vers la fin du V^e s. et dans le courant du VI^e s., la chaussée est abandonnée; les bâtiments sont démolis et les matériaux sont sys-

tématiquement récupérés. Après un apport de terre, l'ancienne aire funéraire est réoccupée comme en témoignent les foyers et fosses à déchets domestiques. Une limite, vraisemblablement matérialisée à la surface par une palissade, sépare cette zone d'habitat, au nord, d'un espace qui paraît vide de toute trace d'occupation, peut être l'asile de la basilique Saint-Denis. Dans le courant du VI^e s., la construction de l'église Saint-Pierre perpétue l'orientation de cette limite. A une vingtaine de mètres à l'ouest, une deuxième église, connue au Moyen Age sous le vocable de Saint-Barthélemy, est édifiée au détriment d'un atelier de fondeurs de boucles de ceintures, de la fin du VI^e à la première moitié du VII^e s. (fig. 3). D'un point de vue architectural, ces constructions présentent des caractéristiques communes. Leur plan combine une nef unique et une abside circulaire ou rectangulaire. L'abside est souvent flanquée d'annexes et la nef entourée de galeries (portiques ?). L'existence d'autres galeries reliant les églises entre elles a également pu être démontrée. Les maçonneries mettent en oeuvre des moellons liés à un mortier maigre. En fondation, les premières assises alternent souvent avec des couches de terre damée. En élévation, les parois intérieures sont systématiquement couvertes d'un enduit de mortier qui est susceptible d'être peint.

La plupart de ces constructions ont un caractère funéraire, comme en témoigne le grand nombre de tombes inhumées dans le sous-sol des églises, de certaines galeries et annexes. C'est principalement à partir de la fin du VI^e s. qu'un cimetière en aire ouverte s'est développé entre la basilique et les deux églises en enfilade. Cette nécropole étant loin d'être investie de manière exhaustive par l'archéologie, sa topochronologie nous échappe encore largement. De manière générale, on observe que, dans la basilique, les sarcophages sont presque exclusivement en pierre "non locale", alors que, dans la nécropole extérieure au bâtiment et dans les deux églises, les cuves moulées en plâtre ont été produites par des ateliers limitrophes du cimetière. Une telle hiérarchie spatiale est sans doute tributaire du rang social des défunts. Dans ce cimetière en aire ouverte et alentour des deux églises, l'étude stratigraphique de plus de 300 sarcophages met en évidence l'existence simultanée de cuves non décorées et de cuves ornées d'une gamme variée de décors qui pourraient également refléter une réalité socio-économique. Toujours dans le cimetière, l'anthropologie montre une prédominance masculine (sur 105

¹ M. WYSS (dir.), *Atlas historique de Saint-Denis. Des origines au XVIII^e siècle*, Documents d'archéologie française 59, Paris, 1996.

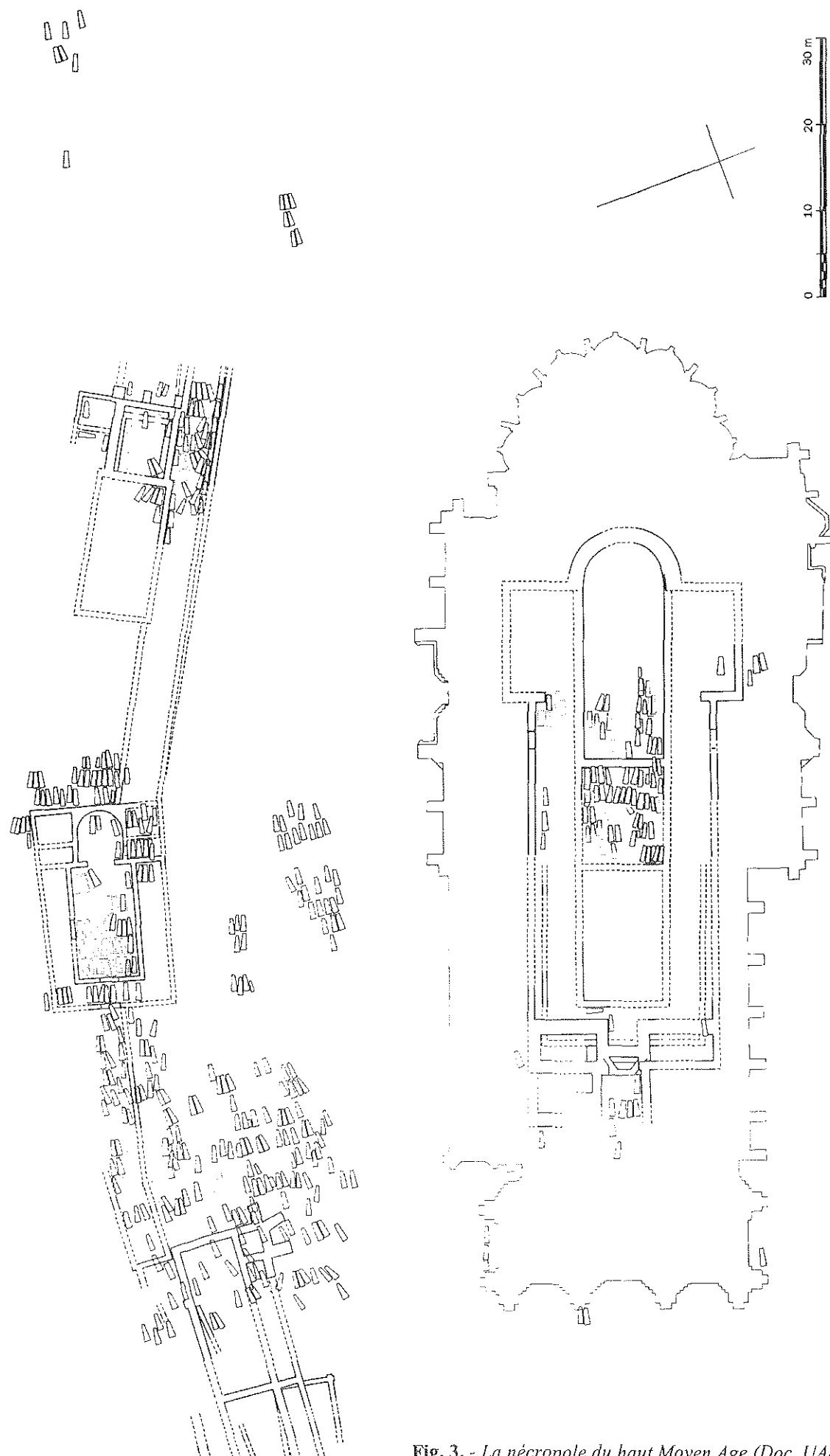


Fig. 3. - La nécropole du haut Moyen Age (Doc. UASD)

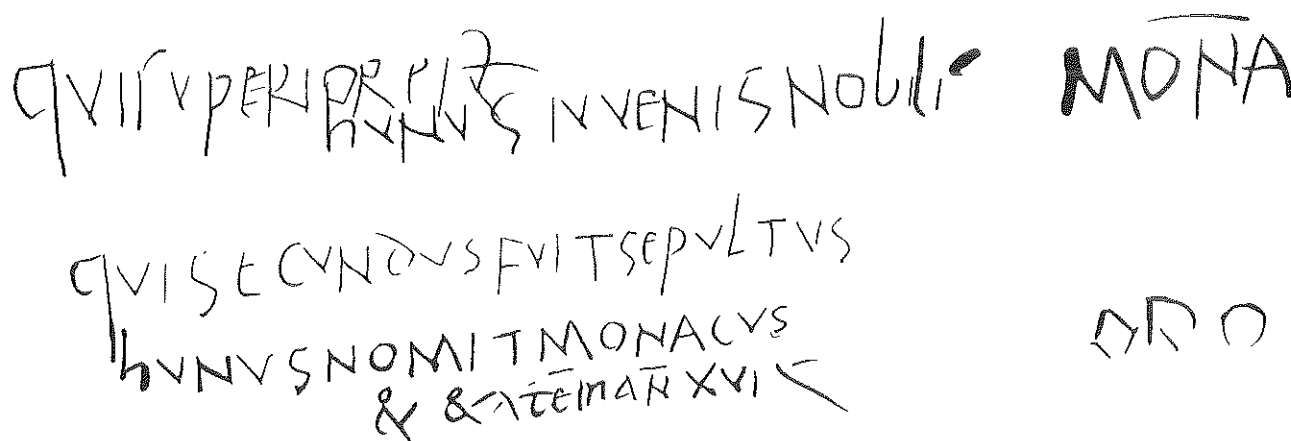


Fig. 4. - Inscription funéraire, IXe s. (Doc. UASD)

individus, on compte 71 hommes et 29 femmes). Il est donc possible que la population inhumée aux abords de la basilique soit plus particulièrement constituée de religieux; un indice nous est fourni par une inscription gravée à l'intérieur d'un sarcophage en plâtre identifiant le défunt à un moine (fig. 4).

Les substructions de l'église de Fulrad ont été principalement dégagées par Crosby. Grâce à l'observation des vestiges, toujours possible, dans l'actuelle crypte archéologique, nous pouvons actuellement réinterpréter certaines données que la recherche tenait à ce jour pour acquises. L'église de plan basilical comprend un transept. Il faut noter que la crypte *martyrium* aménagée dans l'abside est le plus ancien témoin matériel de la vénération de la tombe du saint localisée sous le maître-autel. La restitution de l'extrémité occidentale de l'édifice, traditionnellement identifiée à l'agrandissement de Charlemagne, reste par contre problématique. Suivant les auteurs, les plans figurent soit une contre-abside, soit un porche. Sur place, un ensemble de maçonneries de facture plutôt médiocre suggère l'existence d'un massif occidental qui s'étendait jusqu'à 7 m à l'ouest de la façade. Bien que nous n'ayons pas la preuve qu'une tombe ait été à l'origine de cette extension, l'abondance des inhumations carolingiennes en sarcophage confère à cette partie de l'édifice un rôle funéraire. Il faut également souligner l'importance de deux portes, à l'extrémité orientale des bas-côtés, donnant respectivement au nord sur le cimetière et au sud sur les bâtiments monastiques. D'autre part, il reste à signaler qu'à défaut de vestiges précis, les restitutions proposées pour la chapelle d'Hilduin demeurent hypothétiques.

Dans le courant du VIIIe s., le chapelet d'églises funéraires est complété, à l'ouest, d'un imposant bâtiment civil. L'édifice mesure 14 m de large et plus de 50 m de long. Les maçonneries étaient liées à un mortier très dur. Le bâtiment semble avoir été doté en façade de portiques donnant accès, à l'arrière, à plusieurs salles. Une tour d'angle solidement contrefortée a pu abriter un escalier menant à l'étage. Prenant appui sur des sources écrites, nous identifions cet édifice à un palais.

La construction entraîne un rétrécissement de l'espace funéraire. Parallèlement, les églises funéraires voient leurs annexes et galeries supprimées. Des murs, ou palissades, sont établis entre les constructions subsistantes, conférant à l'ensemble monumental l'allure d'une enceinte autour de laquelle l'habitat vient s'agglomérer. Ainsi, progressivement le cimetière prend un développement intensif, présentant une superposition de sépultures. Dès le VIIIe s., le sarcophage de plâtre est remplacé par une plus grande variété de tombes: coffres de bois, caveaux maçonnés, tombes à entourages de pierres, sans oublier les nombreuses réinhumations dans les sarcophages mérovingiens. A partir de cette époque, la population inhumée dans le cimetière tend vers un équilibre plus conforme à un cimetière paroissial (sur 157 individus, on compte 78 hommes et 48 femmes). C'est sans doute à un changement de fonction comparable que l'on doit le maintien des deux églises.

Michaël WYSS
Archéologue municipal
Ville de Saint-Denis
Unité d'archéologie
8, rue Franciade
93200 Saint-Denis
France

N.C.W. Bateman

The early 11th to mid 12th-century graveyard at Guildhall, City of London

Introduction

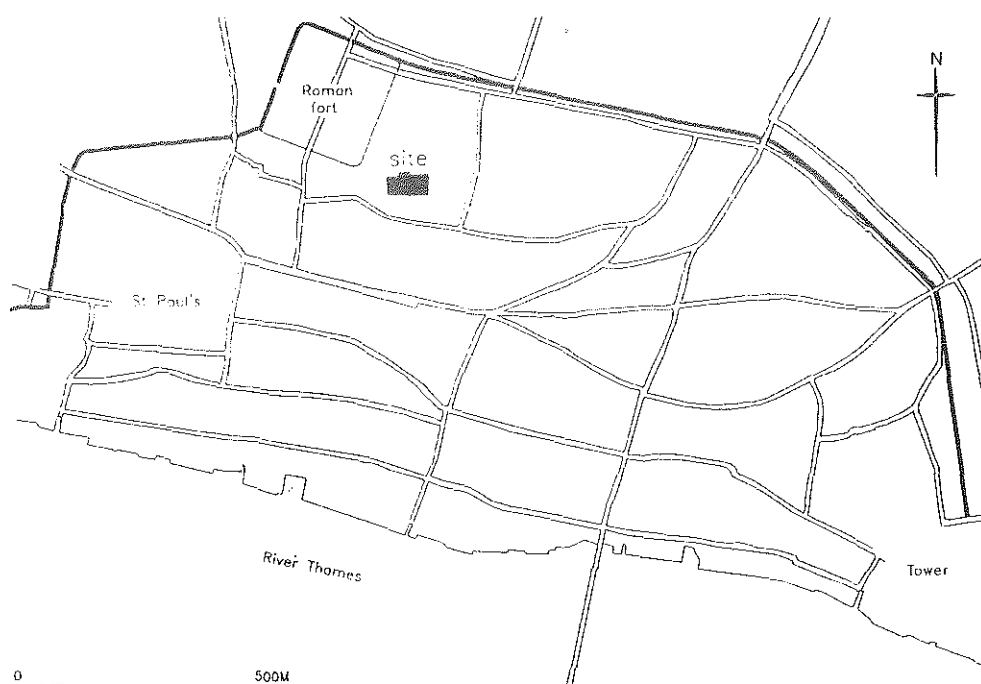
Rescue excavation of the Roman amphitheatre site next to the mediaeval Guildhall of the City of London was undertaken in several phases from 1987-1996 by the Museum of London Archaeology Service.¹ The area is being redeveloped by the Corporation of London as a new Art Gallery, and this necessitates the complete removal of all archaeological deposits on the site. In recognition of the importance of the archaeology the site was scheduled by the Dept. of the Environment, and planning consent was given on condition of full excavation of all deposits. The last phase of excavation finished in November 1996. A substantial program of post excavation analysis has just begun, and it should be understood that dating and interpretations offered below are only provisional.

The site lies in the north-west corner of the city within the area bounded by the Roman and later

mediaeval city wall (see Fig. 1). In places up to six metres of complex urban stratigraphy survive, from deposits associated with the Roman amphitheatre to evidence for many medieval buildings associated with the mediaeval Guildhall itself (see Fig. 2). Along the western side of the site, directly over the old arena of the amphitheatre, and under the present Guildhall Yard, a small area of inhabitation developed in the early-11th century. This comprised a number of domestic buildings, with associated alleys, metalled yards, fences, drains, and middens, and lasted until the mid-12th century when much of it was deliberately cleared and the site levelled for the construction of Guildhall to the north, and for the enlargement of the open space which was to become known as Guildhall Yard.

The earliest documentary references to the Guildhall and its related precinct go back to c. 1128.² Much of the western part of the site has therefore lain protected, with little or no development, beneath

Fig. 1. - Site location with City wall and mediaeval street plan.



¹ In fact the first excavations were undertaken by MoLAS's predecessor the Museum's Dept. of Urban Archaeology.

² C. BARRON, *The Mediaeval Guildhall of London*, 1974, 15 and note 1.

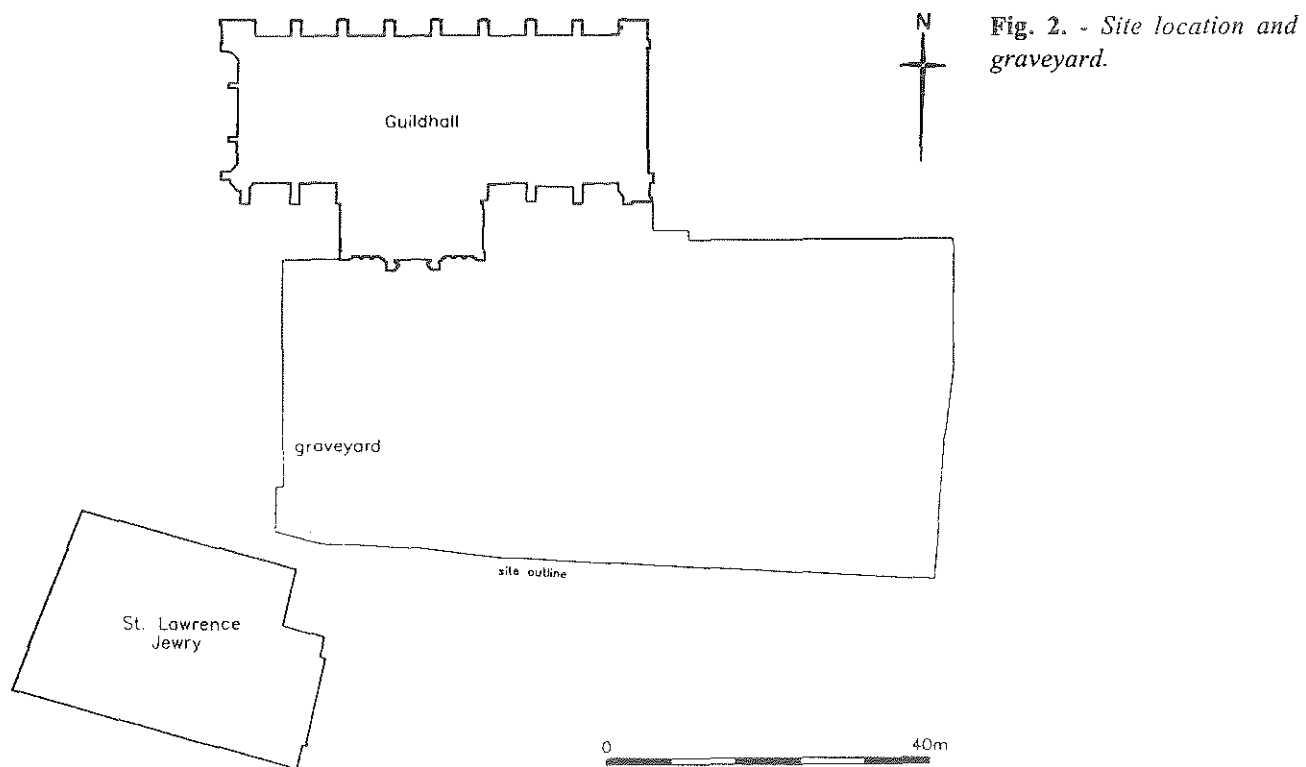


Fig. 2. - Site location and graveyard.

Guildhall Yard till the present. This western part of the site has proved to be one of the most complete areas of late Saxon-early Norman occupation in England. Not only was there a considerable area under excavation (nearly 800 sqm.) with virtually no later disturbance, but excellent organic preservation which has allowed the survival of wattle and timber-work in domestic structures, as well as the 'coffins' described below.

The church

This paper is not, however, concerned with the buildings but with the contemporary churchyard which developed in the south-west corner of the site (see Fig. 2). This churchyard was clearly associated with St Lawrence Jewry, a church which is there to this day.³ The earliest documentary references to St

Lawrence go back to the 12th century. It is generally believed that nearly all the City parishes had been established in their medieval form by the end of the 12th century⁴ and indeed the earliest certain documentary references to the parish of St Lawrence Jewry date from c. 1180, and c. 1197.⁵ There is also a mention of a Lawrence Lane leading from Guildhall to Cheapside in the late 12th century.⁶ In addition there is an unsubstantiated tradition that the church was founded in 1136, and indeed, before confirmation of its early date through our excavations, a suggestion had been made that it was even older, being given by William I to the convent of Montreuil.⁷

Graveyard 1st Phase

The early churchyard of St Lawrence actually passed through at least three very distinct phases, in which

³ None of the original fabric survives. The church was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666 and rebuilt by Wren. It was extensively damaged by bombing in WW2 and effectively rebuilt anew.

⁴ J. DAVIS, *Ecclesiastical History: Part I*, in: *Victoria County History for London I*, 1909, 180 ff.

⁵ H. HARBEN, *A Dictionary of London*, 1918, 341.

⁶ R. WILSON, *The Parish of St Lawrence Jewry with St Mary Magdalen Milk St*, 1938, 14. In the later part of the 12th century the church appeared to belong to the convent of St Savve and St Guingalaens of Montreuil (E. & W. YOUNG, *Old London Churches*, 1956, 95).

The parish of St Lawrence Jewry was known as the Soke of St Winwaleus in the *Liber Albus* (WILSON, *ibid.*, 8).

⁷ WILSON, *op. cit.*, (note 6), 7. See also I. BETTS, N. BATEMAN & G. PORTER, Two Late Anglo-Saxon Tiles and the early history of St Lawrence Jewry, London, *Medieval Archaeology* XXXIX, 1995, 165-170.

⁸ The archaeological sequence of this part of the site is being prepared for publication by Gina Porter of MoLAS. I am indebted to her for her provisional assessment of the sequence. Credit for untangling the complicated sequence must go to her; responsibility for interpretive errors at this stage must remain mine.

its boundaries were encroached upon or expanded again, although broadly speaking within the same location.⁸ That part of the churchyard which lay within the site did not always function as a burial ground: there was an apparent hiatus when wholesale dumping and levelling occurred and the area existed as an open space in which there were pits and an oven.

The earliest phase of the graveyard comprised 18 burials. Two of these have so far provided dendrochronology dates from accompanying timbers, one of 1046 and one of 1066.⁹ These graves are shown on Fig. 3 and were contained within an area bounded on the north side by a wattle fence. This graveyard appears to have preceded all the domestic wattle buildings to the north and east, though a pathway passed through it.

The earliest graveyard was characterised by relatively little intercutting of graves by comparison with the dense usage of the third phase. The graves were mostly about 1.0 m apart, and were generally rather shallow, some no more than c. 0.5 m deep. The graveyard was enclosed within a fence or hedge within which grew at least one tree for which a provisional identification as elder has been suggested. There was evidence of in-situ coppicing on it before it was cut down.¹⁰

All but one of the burials were in what could best be termed 'boxes'. These were loosely constructed wooden rectangular structures of cleft oak or beech boards which were wide but thin.¹¹ Many of them were simply pegged together at the corners with slender dowels, usually at an angle to the timbers. The boxes did not taper to the foot, and often there were no head or foot boards, although one burial had a possible timber 'gravemarker', a simple timber board which appeared to project above the level of the grave cut. One of the 'boxes' was represented by just a pitched 'roof' of two boards resting against each other. These simple structures were very weak – for instance they would not have withstood transporting over anything but a short distance – and were typical of late Saxon woodworking technology.¹² They may have been bound around with withies to give them strength. However the boards themselves

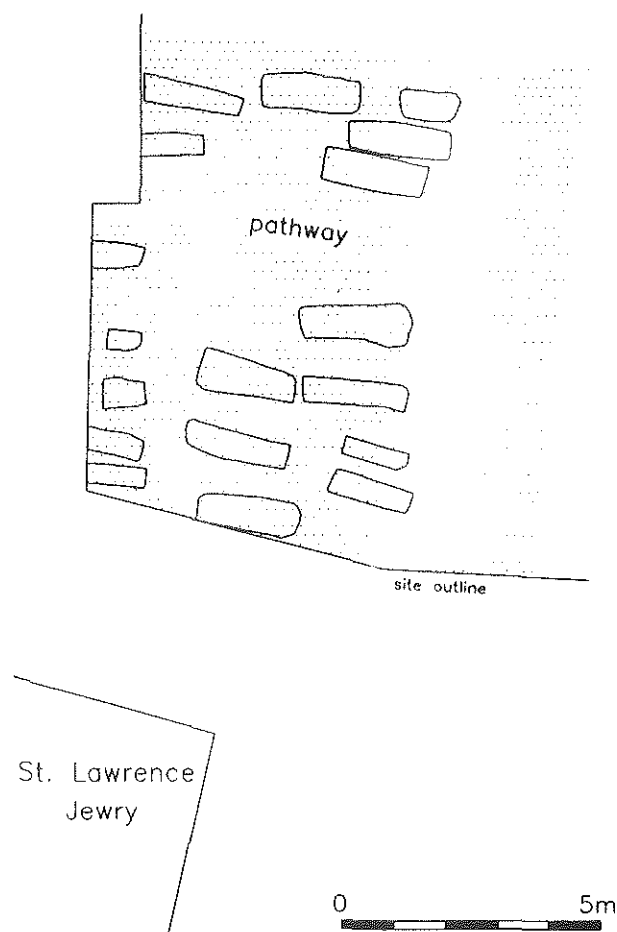


Fig. 3. - Graves phase 1.

were well finished and are testimony to the levels of skill in the contemporary craft of timber cleaving.¹³

A provisional on-site assessment of the 18 burials suggested that 13 were adults, 2 juveniles and 3 infants. Six of the burials were accompanied by 'pillow stones', comprising fragments of re-used (Roman) masonry or large unworked ragstones or chalk blocks. Most of these were found near the head but in at least two instances there were also stones by the feet. At least five of the burials had hazel or willow twigs or rods beside the body, either singly or in bunches of two or three. There was at least one example of a staff about 1.70 m long and 25 mm thick laid parallel to but partially under the body. The 'rods' were mostly c. 400

⁹ I. TYERS, *Guildhall yard: Dendrochronology Spot date Report*, unpub. MoLAS Report DEN07/94, 1994.; and pers. comm. It is expected that many more of the timbers from coffins will prove susceptible to dendrochronological dating.

¹⁰ Pers. comm. Damian Goodburn, MoLAS Ancient Woodworking Specialist.

¹¹ Timber from the graves was very well preserved and tool marks were quite apparent. Boards were a maximum of c. 25 mm thick and generally between 350 mm and 400 mm wide.

Many of the timbers had surviving axe marks: saws were not used in this period. "Recent work in London has shown that what we think of as English medieval ...carpentry, using ...techniques such as sawing, is currently unknown before c. 1180 AD." See D. GOODBURN, *Summary of the Finds of Ancient Woodwork at the Guildhall Excavations: An Archaeological Assessment*, MoLAS unpub. rep., 1995, 24.

¹² *Op. cit.* (note 11), 22.

¹³ *Op. cit.* (note 11), 24.

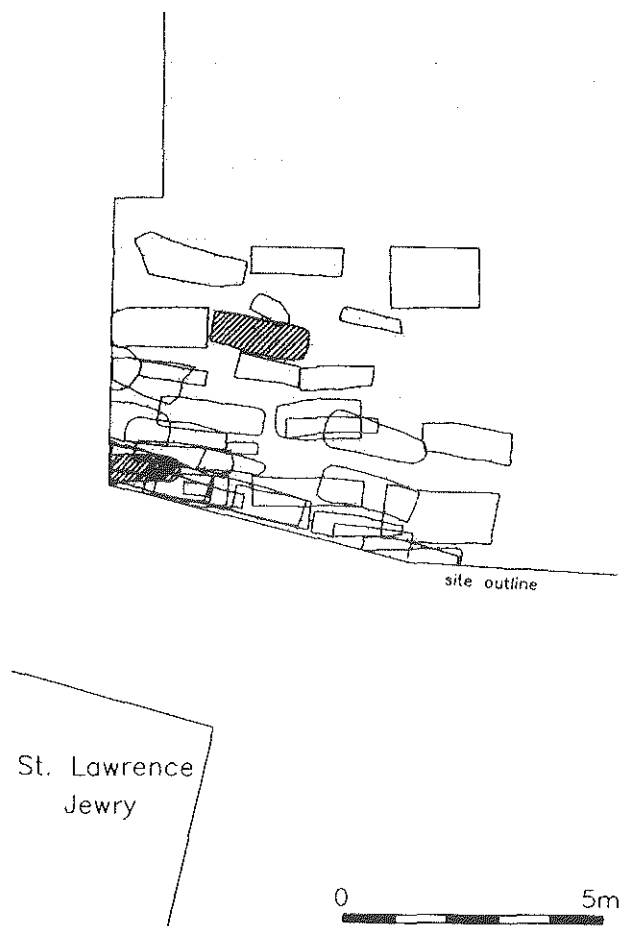


Fig. 4. - Graves phase 2 (hatched) and phase 3 (not hatched).

mm long and 15 mm thick. Sometimes they were laid with the body in the box, sometimes they were underneath the body, or even the box (see below for further discussion).

Graveyard: 2nd phase

During the second phase soil accumulated or was dumped over the previous graves and surrounding ground, and an open space developed, although this had the same property boundaries as the early and later churchyard. This was contemporary with the main development of the timber and wattle buildings to the north and east, during the later-11th and early-12th centuries. There appear to have been only two

burials during this phase (see Fig. 4), one of which has produced a 'coffin' timber date of 1086.¹⁴ One burial was within a box, though it had no end boards. This burial was accompanied by a pillow stone and at least one hazel rod c. 600 mm long by the side of the body. Five more apparent 'rods' laid across the body may in fact represent the remains of withies lashing the body within the box. The other burial was laid under a simple lid of cleft boards and was, again, accompanied by short hazel rods.

Graveyard: 3rd Phase

The third main phase produced 50 burials. Dendrochronology has provided dates for two 'coffin' timbers so far, one of 1139 and one of 1156. These graves are shown unhatched on Fig. 4. Although there may have been some overlap with the end of the saxo-norman building sequence, the majority of these graves seem to have been contemporary with the masonry buildings which developed around Guildhall Yard and the new civic centre from the mid-12th century.¹⁵

Provisional assessment suggests that 34 of the burials were adult with the rest being juveniles or infants. Nearly half of the 50 burials were laid in the ground with no coffin or bier at all. Of those which were put in the ground in some kind of structure, seven were buried in simple 'proto-coffins'; and 17 were buried under a simple 'lid' of one or more boards. However of the latter only three also had boards beneath as well as above.¹⁶ The few 'proto-coffins' which existed were different to the box structures of the first phase – nearly all of them tapered to the foot. Indeed, even where there was no 'coffin', many of the simple board lids also tapered.

This last phase of the graveyard was also the busiest: the burials were mostly intercutting and densely packed within a smaller area than the previous phases. Forty-one were single inhumations but, in contrast with the first phase of the graveyard, there were several multiple inhumations: one burial with three bodies; and three burials with two bodies. Each of these seemed to be an adult accompanied by a juvenile or infant. These burials were either under a simple lid of boards or with no structure at all.¹⁷

¹⁴ *Op. cit.* (note 9).

¹⁵ See note 2 above

¹⁶ Compare Sandwell Priory where one burial was noted with boards below and above; one burial under a board; and at least two burials lay on boards. See HODDER, *op. cit.* (note 17), 100. Daniel lists York and Colchester as places with evidence for timber board grave covers. See C. DANIEL, *Death and burial in*

Medieval England 1066 to 1550, 1997, 163.

¹⁷ The relatively high ratio of multiple to single inhumation can be contrasted with the ratio of 4 double out of 73 burials at Sandwell Priory. See M.A. HODDER, Excavations at Sandwell Priory and Hall 1982-8, *Trans. South Staffs. Arch. and Hist. Soc.* XXXI, 1991, 97.

One of the 'board' burials produced another group of rods laid by the side of the body. Another 'board' burial, which had remains of fabric bound tightly round the body, was also accompanied by a wooden staff laid under the body. This was in fact the best preserved of such staffs being about 60 mm in diameter and c. 1.60 m long. It has been suggested that, because it still had bark on it, it was unlikely to have been cut long before burial (however see note 23).

At least one of the boards upon which the bodies were laid had clearly been used as a bier to transport the body. This particular example was unusual in its curving ends which give it a pronounced 'boat' shape. Around the edges of the board can be seen a number of small holes. These were presumably used to attach withies or cords with which the body was tied firmly to the board before lowering into the ground.

General observations and conclusions

Several observations can be made on the changes in burial practice between the first and last phases. Attention has already been drawn to the narrowing of the space available for the graveyard, and the marked increase in intercutting of graves and multiple burials (at least in the north-east corner under excavation). Furthermore whereas nearly all the first phase burials were within 'boxes', the majority of the last phase either had no structure or just a simple 'lid'. On the other hand some burials in the last phase were within 'proto-coffins', with a tapering shape which showed an evolution away from the simple rectangular boxes of the first phase. Significant differences can also be seen in the accompanying gravegoods. Whereas a third of the burials in the first phase had pillow stones, none of the burials in the last phase had them. Chris Daniel notes in his recent survey of mediaeval burial practices that the practice of placing stones around

the head had a limited chronology in England, lasting from the 10th/11th century to the 12th century, at which time it seems to vanish.¹⁸

There is a similar marked decline to be noted between the first and last phases in the presence of staffs or rods. Nearly a third of the first group were accompanied by staffs or rods, while only two of the 50 graves of the last phase had them. There are in fact parallels for rods and staffs found beside the bodies from a number of other sites. Parallels in Britain include at least five burials at the early-13th century Hulton Abbey in Staffordshire.¹⁹ Of 73 graves at the 12th-century Sandwell Priory – again in the Midlands – at least 21 were accompanied by wooden rods of varying lengths and thicknesses.²⁰ Similar rods or staffs of hazel or willow have also been identified at Bordesley Abbey,²¹ Barton-on-Humber²² and Worcester Cathedral.²³ Traditionally a wooden staff has been seen as the mark of a pilgrim; being one of the five outward signs of the pilgrim along with a red cross, hat, scrip and beard. In his general survey of the evidence concerning such staffs in 1991 Hodder interpreted the thicker and longer rods as potentially functional staffs, while the smaller ones could only have been symbolic. Indeed many of them, including one of the London staffs, still had bark on them and were probably made specifically for the grave.²⁴ The staff of the Worcester Pilgrim (see note 22) seems the classic example of a symbolic staff. However, Chris Daniel argues that there is a vital distinction to be made between proper staffs and much smaller hazel or willow 'rods' or 'wands'. The latter he suggests are probably nothing to do with pilgrims, either real or metaphorical. Instead he argues that they were placed in the grave as symbols of the Resurrection, both hazel and willow being trees which, if coppiced regularly, become effectively eternal. It is likely that they were also, to some degree, a symbol of penance.²⁵

¹⁸ DANIEL, *op. cit.* (note 16), 160-161. He suggests that pillow stones might be seen as a sign of penance or, alternatively, prestige.

¹⁹ W.D. KLEMPERER, The study of burials at Hulton Abbey, *Pre-Printed Papers Vol 4: Death and Burial, Proc. of Conf. Med. Europe 1992*, 85-89. Excavations between 1987 and 1994 produced up to 94 burials, though some were also excavated in the late-19th century. Most of them were in shallow holes with no coffins. Both hazel staffs and birch wands were identified (pers. comm.). The staffs were usually with men, though Elizabeth Audley was buried as late as 1400 with one (P.J. WISE, *Hulton Abbey: A century of excavation*, Staffs. Arch. Studies no. 2, 1985, 3-4).

²⁰ Most burials were inside the church but 6 were excavated in the cemetery NE of the church. Here, however, conditions did not favour organic survival. HODDER, *op. cit.* (note 17), 97-113.

²¹ Two occurrences: a short rod lying with a burial in the

church itself, and a thin willow 'staff' c. 1.6 m long in a burial in the churchyard (P.A.R. RAHITZ *et al.*, Bordesley Abbey, Hereford and Worcester, *West Midlands Archaeol.* 1981, 53-56, esp 54).

²² A pre-Conquest burial with a pair of hazel 'wands': W.J. RODWELL & K. RODWELL, St Peter's Church, Barton-on-Humber, *Antiq. Journal* 62, 1982, 312.

²³ The C15th Worcester Pilgrim was excavated in 1986. His leather boots were well preserved as was his staff of c. 30 mm thickness with a double tip iron ferule. Neither showed evidence of use in life and were probably prepared specially for burial (pers. comm. Jim Spriggs). See also H. LUBIN, *The Worcester Pilgrim*, Worcester Cathedral Publications 1, 1990.

²⁴ See HODDER *op. cit.* (note 17). Damian Goodburn of MOLAS has pointed out (pers. comm.), however, that bark can sometimes be deliberately retained on functional objects for some time.

Some of the best parallels come from Scandinavia. Thus at St Olave's in Trondheim, three of the 13th-century burials were found with hazel sticks beside them, two in coffins and one just in a grave. At the nearby and contemporary church of St Gregorius hazel sticks were found in 21 of 253 graves. Similar burial practices were noted at c. 11th-century St Peter's at Tonsberg and some of the oldest graves in St Clement's church in Oslo. Here and in Bo the graves with hazel sticks all come from phases earlier than the 12th century. Further south at Lund in Sweden and at Kattesund over 40% of the burials around the oldest stave churches were accompanied by hazel sticks. Recent reappraisal of the evidence suggests that the tradition originated in Danish areas²⁵ before 1000 and spread from there to other parts of Scandinavia and, probably, Britain.²⁷

It is worth noting that in London, of course, there was a significant Danish presence from the ninth century on,²⁸ but especially after Cnut's accession in 1016; and there are also suggestions that Cnut occupied a palace close by the Guildhall site in the area of the old Roman fort.²⁹ Furthermore, the timber buildings over the arena which were contemporary with at least the second phase of the graveyard were built in a distinctive Scandinavian style,³⁰ and there is indeed

clear evidence of Scandinavian influence in bone trial pieces from an earlier 11th-century sunken-floored building close by.³¹ A further clue to the nature of occupation in this area may be found in the old name for Maiden Lane (an east-west road immediately south and west of the Guildhall site) This was Ing Lane, which Ekwall construes as meaning 'the lane of the Angles', and suggests that the form must be before 1066.³² Could this have an English/Danish connotation, meaning 'the lane beyond which are the English', as seen from the perspective of Danish inhabitants of the fort area?³³ And are the changes in burial practice in the graveyard described above a witness to the gradual assimilation of that community within the wider London population through the 11th century and early-12th century?

Acknowledgments

The author would particularly like to thank Josephine Brown of MoLAS for her work on AutoCad throughout the project and, in particular, the figures here. Thanks are due also to Tony Dyson (also of MoLAS) for comments and help on the text.

N.C.W. Bateman
Museum of London Archaeology Service
Walker House
87 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4V 4AB
England

²⁵ Chris Daniel suggests evidence as late as 1615 for placing small sticks (*metwands* or *meteyards*) as symbols of the Resurrection in graves (pers. comm.); see also DANIEL, *op. cit.* (note 16), 167-168. He also discusses the possibility of their significance as 'wands of office', but finds this a less probable function.

²⁶ Lund is in modern Sweden but has always been culturally, and legally until 1814, part of Denmark.

²⁷ A. CHRISTOPHERSEN & S.W. NORDEIDE, *Kaupangen ved Nidela*, Riksantikvarens Skrifter Nr 7, 108-109. I am grateful to Hanne Rendall-Wooldridge for the translation of this section.

²⁸ It is interesting to note that the Court of Hustings, the most ancient of the courts and bodies which were later subsumed into the City administration run from the Guildhall, was itself of Danish origin, certainly from before 990. See T. DYSON & J. SCHOFIELD, *Saxon London*, in: J. HASLAM (ed), *Anglo-Saxon Towns*, 1984, 296.

²⁹ There are many references to a palace in the north-west corner of the city, the latest and possibly most reliable of which

is that of the chronicle of Florence of Worcester for 1017 (see D. WHITELOCK (ed), *English Historical Documents 1: c. 500-1042*, 2nd ed., 1979, 312). This makes specific mention of Cnut throwing the body of a treacherous earl over the city walls. Vince too argues that Cnut had a base in the City (A. VINCE, *Saxon London*, 1991, 57).

³⁰ The so-called 'bulwerk' style, otherwise unparalleled in Britain. See D. GOODBURN, *Beyond the Post-hole: Notes on Stratigraphy and Timber Buildings from a London Perspective*, in: L. SHEPHERD (ed), *Interpreting Stratigraphy 5*, 43-52.

³¹ A sunken-floored building immediately by the entrance to the amphitheatre produced, amongst other finds of early-C11th date, several large bone fragments carved as trial pieces with interlocking patterns in pre-Ringerike style (Ian Riddler, then of MoLAS Finds Section, pers. comm.)

³² E. EKWALL, *Street-names of the City of London*, 1954, 123.

³³ I am indebted to Tony Dyson of MoLAS for this suggestion.

Simon Mays

Life and Death in a Medieval village

Introduction

Wharram Percy is a deserted Mediaeval village in North Yorkshire, England (Fig. 1). An extensive programme of excavation was undertaken at the site between 1950 and 1990. Investigations have taken place both in the settlement, and in the church and churchyard. These last have resulted in the recovery of nearly 700 skeletons. Most of the burials are of ordinary peasants.

The chalk geology at Wharram Percy has resulted in excellent bone preservation (Fig. 2), and, unusually for a British rural site, both good settlement and burial evidence are available. The site therefore offers an excellent opportunity to examine life and death in rural Mediaeval England. Scientific analysis of the skeletons is still in progress; the aim of the present paper is to present some of the results which have so far been obtained. Among the themes which have been investigated are burial practices, the relationship between Wharram Percy and the nearby urban centre of York, and the demographic structure of the population.

Burial practices

In the churchyard at Wharram Percy, infant burials were concentrated in an area immediately to the north of the church (Table 1).

About two-thirds of infants who died before their first birthday were buried in the north churchyard, compared with only about one third of children older than two years. A transition in preference for burial location seems to occur between one and two years old. One obvious explanation might be that baptism of infants generally occurred at this age – the north side of the church is the traditional area for, amongst others, burials of the unbaptised (Harding 1996; Grauer 199, 70). In Mediaeval times, baptism was an important sacrament: the infant, born from the carnal lust of his parents, and inheriting the sin of Adam and Eve, needed to be cleansed of the sin of his concep-

tion and heritage. Proper baptism was undertaken one week after birth (Shahar 1990, 46), however if the newborn infant's life appeared in danger then it was baptised immediately; in the absence of a priest any lay person could perform a baptism, and indeed were obliged to do so as a Christian duty (*ibid.*). Given the importance of baptism in the Mediaeval mind, it seems inconceivable that it could be routinely delayed for 1-2 years, and hence, because of the high infant mortality, denied to so many infants. Perhaps some other life-transition occurred during this period which was given recognition in burial treatment at Wharram Percy.

Table 1 also shows that more children (aged 2-18) were interred in the North churchyard than adults. Perhaps the transition to adulthood was also to some extent being given recognition in burial location at Wharram Percy, although the small numbers of adolescent burials means that the precise age at which this transition occurred cannot be established.

Rural and urban life

Some large Mediaeval cemetery sites have been excavated in York, and the published reports on these series enable comparison of urban dwellers with the rural group from Wharram Percy, which lies only

Table 1

Comparison of age structure of burials to the immediate north of the church (area prefix NA) with those from other areas.

Age	Location	
	NA	Other
Perinatal	44 (67%)	22 (33%)
0-0.9	21 (60%)	14 (40%)
1-1.9	15 (50%)	15 (50%)
2-2.9	8 (38%)	13 (62%)
3-4.9	12 (38%)	20 (62%)
5-18	47 (33%)	96 (67%)
Adults (18+)	70 (19%)	290 (80%)

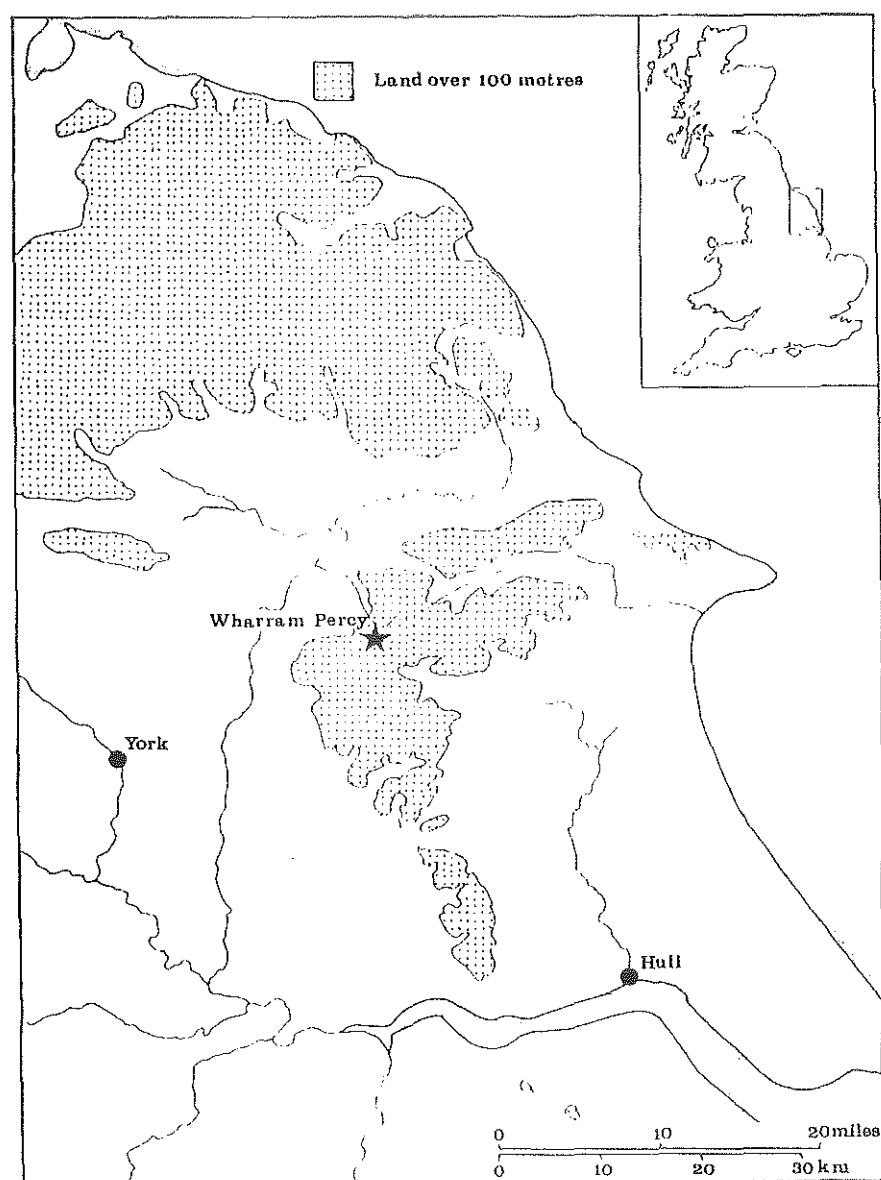


Fig. 1. - Map showing the location of the deserted Mediaeval village of Wharram Percy (after Beresford & Hurst 1990, Fig. 1).

about 30km from York. Among the aspects which have been studied are public health and rural/urban migration patterns.

Public health

Porotic hyperostosis is a condition manifest in skeletal remains as pitting of the skull, particularly the roofs of the orbits (Fig. 3). It represents an overgrowth of the diploe, apparently in response to anaemia (Stuart-Macadam 1987, 1989), in the majority of populations iron-deficiency anaemia. Iron-deficiency anaemia is rarely the result of lack of iron in the diet, it generally results from disease, particularly gastrointestinal infections or parasites: diarrhoea causes food to pass through the gut too quickly for nutrients and minerals such as iron to be absorbed, and parasite infestations may lead to anaemia through chronic blood

loss (Kent & Dunn 1996; Stuart-Macadam 1992; Kent *et al.* 1994).

The frequency of porotic hyperostosis at Wharram Percy was compared with that among the Mediaeval burials from the churchyard at St Helen-on-the-Walls in York. A higher rate of porotic hyperostosis is evident in the York group than at Wharram Percy (Table 2).

Table 2

Porotic hyperostosis at St Helen-on-the-Walls, York and Wharram Percy. The St Helen's data are from Grauer 1993.

	Frequency of porotic hyperostosis	
Wharram Percy	125/502	(25%)
York, St Helen-on-the-Walls	267/460	(58%)

Large numbers of people living in close proximity favour the spread of disease. As well as offering increased opportunities for disease transmission between persons, sanitation and hygiene also tend to be poorer, mainly due to contamination of water supplies. These sorts of crowded, unhygienic conditions characterised many Mediaeval cities, and written sources show that York was no exception (Grauer 1993). The high rate of porotic hyperostosis at St Helen-on-the-Walls, situated in one of the poorest parishes, may reflect this. The lower rate at Wharram Percy may testify to the lesser sanitation problems posed in a rural parish with a lower population density.

The conditions in Mediaeval cities would doubtless have been conducive to the spread of most infectious diseases. An important way in which infectious disease manifests itself on the skeleton is via periostitis, the sub-periosteal deposition of fresh bone on existing bone surfaces. Frequencies of periostitis are higher at York than at Wharram Percy (Table 3).

This suggests a greater pathogen load in the urban environment. More of the St Helen's urban people were probably suffering from infectious disease for more of their lives than were those from Wharram Percy.

It takes time for infectious disease to produce skeletal changes, so it is only the longer-lasting conditions which have the potential to leave traces on the bones. A group like Wharram Percy, who show relatively little in the way of bone infections, may do so because few had enough resistance to infectious disease to survive long enough once they did contract it for it to affect the skeleton. Perhaps those at Wharram Percy did not have the long-term exposure from birth to a large variety of pathogens that city-dwellers did, so that when infectious disease did strike it generally killed quickly, before bone changes could occur. The high rate of bone changes in the York group, as well as indicating a greater disease load, may also be a testament to these people's resistance to disease, many recovering, or at least surviving for extended periods before succumbing. Another aspect of the bone evidence perhaps supports this idea. Of the periosteal lesions in the York group, the majority (68%) were remodelled, indicating that the individual was



Fig. 2. - Skeletons from Wharram Percy under excavation.

Fig. 3. - A skull from one of the Wharram Percy burials. The pitting in the orbits indicated by the arrows is porotic hyperostosis.



Table 3

Periostitis at St Helen-on-the-Walls, York and Wharram Percy. Figures for St Helen's are from Grauer 1993.

	Frequency of periostitis	
Wharram Percy	59/687	(9%)
York, St Helen-on-the-Walls	144/661	(22%)

rallying or had rallied from the disease which caused them (Grauer 1993). At Wharram Percy, remodelled lesions are a minority (40%).

Migrants

A potential problem when comparing urban and rural sites is that we do not know what proportion of their lives people spent in the parish in which they were buried. In the Mediaeval period, urban centres were maintained by immigration from surrounding rural areas (Russell 1948), so some of those buried at urban cemeteries may have spent some part of their lives in a rural rather than an urban environment. This means that there may be in many cases a blurring of distinctions in terms of pathologies etc. between urban and rural assemblages, and it also reminds us to treat comparisons between sites with caution.

Goldberg (1986) has shown from a study of documentary evidence from northern England, that in the Mediaeval period the populations of many urban centres showed a sex imbalance in favour of females. For example in Hull the sex ratio was 0.86 and at York 0.91. She connects this with female-led migration into urban centres from surrounding rural areas. Migrant female labour was absorbed into domestic service and craft industries such as weaving. Many of these migrants probably settled in the poorer areas of cities. In York, rental evidence points towards a high incidence of single women living in cheap tenements in poor districts such as Aldwark (Goldberg 1986). In the skeletal assemblage from the cemetery of the church of St Helen-on-the-Walls, Aldwark, there were 394 adult females and 338 adult males (Dawes 1980), a statistically significant sex imbalance in favour of females. Although we should be wary of making simplistic connections between historical and archaeological data, one cannot help but wonder whether the excess of females found at St Helen's is a reflection of female-led migrations into the parish from rural settlements in the York area.

At Wharram Percy there are 215 males and 136 females, giving a sex ratio of 1.58 in favour of males. Wharram Percy lies about 20 miles from York, and Russell (1948) offers historical evidence pertaining

to York that many probably migrated this sort of distance to become resident in the city. Perhaps at Wharram Percy we are seeing the other side of the coin as far as migration patterns are concerned, as female-led emigration left a rural sex ratio dominated by males.

Age at death

In adult burials from archaeological sites it is difficult to determine age at death with any great precision, particularly once individuals are past middle age. A number of ageing techniques exist for age at death determination in archaeological material, the most reliable of which is probably dental wear, however even this only enables an assemblage to be resolved into fairly broad age categories. Dental wear was used to estimate adult age at death in the Wharram Percy assemblage; the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 suggests that at Wharram Percy a Mediaeval peasant on the threshold of adulthood had about a four in ten chance of living to beyond 50 years old. However there are a number of possible biasing factors which need to be taken into account before this interpretation of the data can be accepted. If we are correct in our inference that emigration to cities like York was an important factor at Wharram Percy, then the effect of this needs to be considered. The key point here is the age at which migrants tended to leave. For example, if most left in middle age, this would have the effect of skewing the Wharram Percy adult age at death distribution towards the younger age groups, whereas if most left in late adolescence this would have little effect, as those that remained could either die young or live to grow old. Logically, one might expect most migrants to leave in late adolescence or early adulthood, and this is to some extent supported by Goldberg's documentary data for migrants into York, but in the last analysis this question must remain unresolved. We also need to remember that the Wharram Percy burials, like most assemblages from archaeological sites, cover a period of several centuries, so that at best they will represent longevity data averaged over a very long period.

In order to help put the Wharram Percy figures in context it is helpful to compare them with documen-

Table 4
Age distribution of Wharram Percy adult burials

Estimated Age	Number	Percent
18-29	65	21
30-49	116	39
50+	119	40

Table 5
Age distribution in Russell's (1937) demographic study

Age	N	%
21-29	58	10
30-49	232	40
50+	292	50

tary data on Mediaeval longevity. Reliable documentary data of this type are few, and those which do exist have not always been published in a form conducive to comparison with archaeological data. However one study which can be used for this purpose here is that of Russell (1937). He presents data on adult age at death from the period 1250-1348 gleaned from the Inquisitions Post-Mortem.

Although Russell's data are not too dissimilar to those from Wharram Percy, the former are in general a little older, with more dying in the 50+ group. There may be a number of reasons for this. For example, the Wharram Percy peasants were among the poorest members of what was a highly stratified society, whereas the documentary data refer to wealthy landowners. One might therefore expect the longevity of the Wharram Percy peasants to be less. Furthermore, the documentary data exclude the great plague years of the mid 14th century, whereas the osteological data cover the entire Mediaeval period, plagues and all. This would tend to skew the documentary data towards the older ages. In summary, despite shortcomings in both the historical and archaeological data, the Wharram Percy figures are not too dissimilar to those of Russell's written evidence, and the discrepancies which do exist are understandable in the light of the differences between the two data sets.

References

- BERESFORD J. & Hurst M. 1990: *Wharram Percy*, Batsford, London.
- DAWES J. 1980: The Human Bones, in: *The Cemetery of St Helen-on-the-Walls, Aldwark*, The Archaeology of York Vol 12/1, York, 19-120.
- GOLDBERG P.J.P. 1986: Female Labour, Service and Marriage in the Late Mediaeval Urban North, *Northern History* 22, 18-38.
- GRAUER A. 1991: Patterns of Life and Death, in: H. BUSH & M. ZVELEBIL (eds), *Health in Past Societies*, British Archaeological Reports S567, Oxford, 67-80.
- GRAUER A. 1993: Patterns of Anaemia and Infection From Mediaeval York, England, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 91, 203-213.
- HARDING C. 1996: Wharram Percy (North Yorkshire): Topography and Development of the Churchyard, in: H. GALINIÉ & E. ZADORA-RIO (eds), *Archéologie du cimetière chrétien. Actes du 2^e colloque ARCHEA*, Tours, 183-191.
- KENT S. & DUNN D. 1996: Anaemia and the Transition of Nomadic Hunter-Gatherers to a Sedentary Lifestyle: Follow-Up Study of a Kalahari Community, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 99, 455-472.
- KENT S., WEINBERG E.D. & STUART-MACADAM P. 1994: The Etiology of Anaemia of Chronic Disease and Infection, *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 47, 23-33.
- RUSSELL J.C. 1937: Length of Life in England 1250-1348, *Human Biology* 9, 528-541.
- RUSSELL J.C. 1948: *British Mediaeval Population*, Albuquerque.
- SHAHAR S. 1990: *Childhood in the Middle Ages*, London.
- STUART-MACADAM P. 1987: Porotic Hyperostosis: New Evidence to Support the Anaemia Theory, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 74, 521-526.
- STUART-MACADAM P. 1989: Nutritional Deficiency Disease: A Survey of Scurvey, Rickets and Iron Deficiency Anaemia, in: M.Y. ISCAN & K.A.R. KENNEDY (eds), *Reconstruction of Life From the Skeleton*, New York, 201-222.
- STUART-MACADAM P. 1992: Porotic Hyperostosis: A New Perspective, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 87, 39-47.

Simon Mays
English Heritage
23 Savile Row
London, W1X 1AB
UK

Heather A. King

Burials and High Crosses at Clonmacnoise (Ireland)

St Ciaran's monastery of Clonmacnoise, founded in the middle of the 6th century, is situated on the east bank of the river Shannon at a point in the centre of Ireland where the Shannon meets the Sli Mhor (the great road) on the Eiscir Riada. This esker traverses Ireland from east to west while the Shannon was the north to south routeway and the location of the monastery at this crossing point undoubtedly contributed to the fact that the monastery flourished over the following six centuries. It was, as Con Manning (1994a) has described in his booklet entitled *Clonmacnoise*, not only a great monastic centre but also a place of learning, trade and craftsmanship. Fortunately, it did not develop during the later and post-medieval periods into a modern town and apart from the increasing number of tourists visiting the site today, the monastery is still situated in 'a quiet watered land'¹ much as it must have been in the early 6th century.

Fascinating glimpses of the development of the monastery over the early centuries can be gleaned from the Annals. It would appear that within seven months of the foundation of the monastery there may have been two churches on the site as the Annals of Clonmacnoise record that Ciaran was buried in the Eaglias Beag (the little church). An enclosing boundary is mentioned when, in the closing years of the 6th century, St Columba visited the monastery during the abbacy of Ailither (Manning 1994a, 9). Pilgrimage begins as early as the 7th century (Harbison 1991, 51) and pilgrims and guests are lodged in a guesthouse. The great stone church is built by King Flann and Abbot Colman in the early 10th century and paved roads are being constructed in the 11th century. The church of St. Finghin, the Nun's church and the Round Tower are mentioned in the 11th and 12th centuries while the extent of the 'town' of Clonmacnoise is evident in the 12th and 13th centuries when we read of 47 houses being burned near the Abbots lodging and of 105 houses burned in the town (Macalister 1909, 112-123).

When one looks at the site today one can point to the great stone church built by King Flann, to St Ciaran's Church, to the Cairn of the Three Crosses or to the Round Tower, but it is difficult to envisage 105 houses or where they were located or to imagine the busy bustling town that it must have been during the Early Medieval period. Excavations conducted over the last twelve years have, however, confirmed the existence of these settlement features and we can now point to certain areas and say that this is where the streets, houses and workshops were located (Manning 1986, 1990, 1991; King 1991, 1992, 1993a, 1994b, 1995b, 1996). In addition, recent underwater investigation has shown that the inhabitants, pilgrims and tradesmen, who lived in or visited the town, were able to cross the Shannon on a wooden bridge as early as 804 (Boland 1996, 75-76). Fieldwork undertaken by the writer over a ten year period (King 1993b, 1994c & d, 1995c) and a geophysical team under Harold Mytum of York University and licenced by the National Monuments Service during the last three summers is helping to confirm the full extent of the monastic settlement.

Turning to one of the subjects in the title of this paper we also know from the Annals of the existence of crosses on the site in the early 10th century although some of the surviving examples were probably carved during the 9th century (de Paor 1987; Harbison 1994; O Murchadha & O Murchu 1988; Hicks 1980). The Cairn of the Three Crosses is mentioned in the early 10th century with other crosses such as the High Cross in the middle of the 10th century and the crosses of Bishop Ethen and Congal in the 11th century. None of these crosses can be linked with the surviving monuments on the site today although the 'Cross of the Scriptures', as described in the Annals in 1060, is regarded as being the west cross. The original location of these crosses is also unknown even though the Annals tell us that the Cross of Congal was at one end of a causeway connecting it with the Cairn of the Three Crosses and the Cross of Bishop Ethen was connected with Irdom Chiarain. A 17th century engraving published in the second

¹ Line from a 17th poem translated by Rolleston.

edition of James Ware's *De Hibernia et antiquitatibus eius disquisitiones* (Manning 1994b) shows a cross at the west front of the cathedral, presumably the Cross of the Scriptures, and another, now missing cross, in the south-east corner of the graveyard. An 18th century plan published in Harris's edition of Ware's work shows the two previously mentioned crosses in the same position with a further two crosses to the north and south of the cathedral. Three crosses stand in the Old Burial Ground today and are located to the north, west and south of the cathedral while fragments of two others are stored on site and there is a sixth shaft in the National Museum of Ireland.

Clonmacnoise has been documented as a place of internment since the death of Ciaran and abbots, pilgrims, scribes and High Kings were buried there during the Early Medieval period. Little information has come down to us about precisely where these people were buried, with the exception of some High Kings, and, in contrast with many other early monastic sites, there is no visible evidence of early burial on the site today. If one accepts that the Early Christian cross slabs were burial markers, and Clonmacnoise has almost eight hundred of these, many with a name inscribed, none have been found 'in situ' over a burial.

An opportunity to address the problems of why the crosses were located to the west, north and south of the cathedral, of how long they were in that position and if they were marking a burial or something special arose in 1990 when The National Monuments Service decided to build a Visitor's Center to cater for the increasing numbers of tourists who now visit the site. The provision of this Visitor Facility meant that the High Crosses were relocated indoors and excavation took place before replicas of the monuments were placed on the original sites. These excavations yielded some very interesting results, the full implications of which will involve some further analysis but a preliminary account is given here.

South Cross

This cross, which can probably be dated to the mid 9th century (de Paor 1987; O Murchadha & O Murchu 1988), was removed from its base, carefully wrapped and removed in 1992 to the Visitor's center. Excavation took place in 1994. A number of cross slabs were located during the removal of the cross, some of which had clearly been used to prop the edges of the cross during earlier tidying-up operations. Others were found during excavation but only two will be commented upon here. Firstly, a small slab, with an equal armed Greek cross within a rectangular frame and the name Fogartach, was found

face down in a bed of yellow sand directly below the cross base. Underneath this, in the same yellow sand, there was another rough slab incised with a simple ringed cross. Further excavation showed that this yellow sand was concentrated in a large post-pipe 85 cm deep and c.55 cm wide within a pit c.2 m in diameter below the cross. The sand appeared to be a relatively clean backfill of a post-pipe as there was no layering and apart from a few animal and human bones there was only one artefact found. A date of 781-790AD (GrN 21780) was applied to one of the disturbed human bones. The artefact was a plain-ringed polyhedral headed bronze pin which has many parallels from the Dublin excavations. While the date range for this type of pin falls somewhere between the early 10th to late 12th century the main clustering of dates would suggest c.920-1050 (Fanning 1994, 25-36).

Surrounding the cross there were fourteen burials which can be identified as post medieval or modern in date, some having associated shroud pins, coffin nails, rosary beads etc. with a further twelve burials, most of which were Early Medieval. The later burials represented both sexes while the earlier examples were all adult males. Carbon 14 dates indicate that the earliest burials are probably 7th century with others dating from the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries. The earliest example, B.26 dated to 600-692 AD (GrN-21779) was of an adult male who was buried in a simple grave with no associated finds or features. A 7th/8th century burial, B.3 dated 691-704 AD (GrN -21774), had pillow stones and a row of small stones below the spine while another similarly dated burial (B.23 dated to 692-700AD (GrN 21778), had fist-sized stones under the head. One of the 9th/10th century examples, B.18 dated 886-991 AD (GrN 21776), had ear-muffs, ie. stones placed on either side of the head, and stones under the back which had raised the upper part of the body as if it were resting on a pillow. It also had a small flat iron object, which was found at waist level and may have been a belt strengthener.

The main conclusions drawn from this excavation were that the earlier male burials were interred in string lines on a south-west to north-east orientation and that apart from the earliest burial (B. 26 which was below the central pit), they were interred around the pit over which the South Cross was erected. It would appear that the graves must have been marked in some way as no burial cut another. The pit itself had obviously contained something, which had been removed, and then backfilled with yellow sand which incorporated the bronze dress pin. The simple ringed cross slab and the Fogartach slab, which may date to the late 8th or 9th century (O'Floinn 1995, 252-253) were then placed on top of the sand and the South

Cross put in position. Subsequently the more modern burials were inserted around the cross base but these were aligned west/east and there was ample evidence for disturbance of these and other contemporary burials. A small number of finds including a bone gaming piece, cut antler and iron objects suggest the remnants of Early Christian domestic activity.

Cross of the Scriptures (West cross)

The cross, which is one of the best known of the figurative crosses in Ireland and is probably early 10th century in date (de Paor 1987; Harbison 1994, 101), was lifted by crane in a single operation to the Visitor facility. An examination of the under surface of the base showed that it had been roughly worked to provide a reasonably level surface. Excavation at this site revealed a similar number of burials and a similar orientation for the early burials as was found under the South Cross. The notable difference on this site was that this area had considerable evidence for settlement prior to its use for internment. The levels into which the earlier burials were interred contained hearths, partial circles of post-holes and deposits of ash while the finds included iron objects, a bone pin, bronze tweezers, a mould fragment, a stone hone and cut antler. The 'early' burials (the C 14 dates have not been processed as yet) were also adult males and similarities with burial practises at the South cross were noted here. Ear muffs or pillow stones were found with some internments but there was a curious anomaly with each of the six earliest internments. A piece of animal bone, generally a cattle rib, was found in close proximity to the body. In one case it was immediately under the chin while in two cases it was very close to the right hand of the skeleton.

The most interesting discovery, however, on this site was that of a rectangular pit directly under the cross base which cut through the occupation deposits for slightly over 1 m. There was clear evidence for the pit having held a large rectangular post and while wood has not been identified in the material scraped off the sides of the pit the impression of wood was quite visible when excavated. The conclusions drawn were of a rectangular wooden marker (? a cross) set into a pit which at some point was removed, the pit quickly backfilled and the stone cross placed over the pit. Here too the 'early' burials were clearly aligned in string lines around this wooden marker or cross and they must also have been marked on the surface as no burial cut the other. In contrast the later burials were oriented west/east and in one case four burials were superimposed one above the other, each partly damaging the earlier internment.

The North Cross

This cross, considered by some writers to be 9th century in date (Harbison 1992, 377-379; Hicks 1980), was situated 11.9 m due north of the north wall of the cathedral. Prior to the excavation the form of the base was unrecorded although early photographs show that it was visible on the ground surface and that it had been partly excavated in the 1950s. The recent excavation, in a small 2.5 m square cutting, revealed that it was set in a millstone of sandstone conglomerate. The upper surface of the stone had three quadrilateral steps cut out of the round and it had vertical grooves or rebates at the corners to give the impression of rectangular base. A parallel for the reshaping of a millstone and for its use as a cross base can be seen at Iona on St John's Cross base (Manning 1992, 8-9).

Immediately under the base there was an undecorated triangular stone and below that a pillow shaped stone with a small hollow pecked into one surface. The principal features surrounding the base were relatively modern burials some of which had shroud pins and coffin furniture etc. At a lower level, there were six intact burials and a quantity of disarticulated bone apart from one small area of material with charcoal and slag which was not disturbed by burial. These earlier burials were all male and none had associated objects apart from one with shroud pins. Of primary interest here were two burials (B.9 and B.14) which were located directly under the base of the cross. Neither was completely intact, but the lowermost burial (B.14) was dated by RC to 1570 ± 25 BP (GrN 20667) which means c. 600AD at the latest. Both of these burials had a congenital deformity of the neck which suggested to the paleopathologist, Laureen Buckley, a familial connection. Burial 14 was in situ when a charnel pit was opened into which 22 skulls were placed and subsequently B.9 was interred above the pit. No other burials were found under the cross base but clearly B.9 was disturbed at some time prior to the cross base being placed in position.

The stratigraphy underneath the North Cross shows that here also there was some slight evidence for a pre-burial phase on the site with finds of amber, bronze, slag and furnace material. The North Cross may have been preceded by an earlier monument at a similar distance to the cathedral as the south and west crosses but as the cross appears not to be in its original location the site of any wooden marker has probably been disturbed by modern burial.

Conclusions.

The excavations at the three crosses have provided us with answers to some questions but seem to

have set up a number of challenges. Firstly, it is now clear that there was domestic activity in this area of the monastery in the early phases of the life of St Ciaran's monastery and that the area was subsequently utilised for burial from at least as early as the 7th century. The early burials were all adult males and it would appear that they were marked above ground as they were undisturbed by later internments. They were aligned south-west to north-east in string lines and, with the exception of the 7th century Burial 26 under the South Cross, were aligned on wooden markers or crosses. Here we are faced with the first problem; the pits for the early markers/crosses, and indeed the replacement crosses, are precisely the same distance from the west and south walls of cathedral which Manning has dated to 909 (1995, 30-33) suggesting contemporaneity with the building while the burials are not on the same orientation as the present building and, in any event, pre-date it.

The second question to be asked is why and when the semicircular area in front of the cathedral was marked out by wooden markers or crosses. It is clear that the area was used for burial before the markers were set up as Burial 26, which is underneath the pit of the South Cross, indicates a post-700 date. The likelihood is that the area was defined c.700 as the burials of the 8th and later centuries were aligned with the wooden markers. The burials are not confined however within or outside the designated area so the markers do not actually define a special area of internment and their relationship with the predecessor of Flann's cathedral remains unknown.

The third question to ask is when were the wooden markers replaced by the stone crosses. Prior to excavation the tempting option was to suggest the year 909 when King Flann's cathedral was completed and when, as Manning suggested, the Cross of the Scriptures, dedicated to Flann, may have been set up directly in front of the west door (1995, 30-33). The argument is very persuasive and on present evidence, without RC dating for that excavation, there is nothing to detract from this proposition in relation to the Cross of the Scriptures. There was clearly an earlier monument of wood in that position which was quickly removed and replaced by the new stone cross which King Flann had commissioned. It would also be appropriate to see the South Cross, which most art historians would now agree was carved in the mid 9th century, being moved to a place of prominence near the new cathedral. After all it was carved to commemorate Flann's father Maelsechnaill who was also recognised as high king of Ireland and was buried at Clonmacnoise (O'Murchadha & O Murchu 1988; Harbison 1994, 98; de Paor 1987, 140-143). To ac-

cept this thesis one has to consider an earlier date for the polyhedral-headed pin, found in the pit below the cross, than is generally accepted. As noted above the date range for these pins is 920-1050 (Fanning 1994, 28, Fig. 9) and these dates would appear to challenge the acceptance of a 909 date for the reorganisation of the area to the west of the new cathedral. However there are three finds of polyhedral-headed pins dated to the eight or ninth century dates (Fanning 1994, 27, 30) so perhaps one should not worry unduly about a decade outside the accepted range. One could therefore succumb to the temptation that, in preparation for the dedication of the new cathedral, King Flann re-ordered the area to the west of the cathedral by removing the older wooden crosses and replacing them with the north cross, his father's cross to the south of the cathedral and placing his own new cross, the Cross of the Scriptures, directly in front of the west door.

References

- BOLAND D. 1996: Clonmacnoise Bridge, *Excavations 1995*, Dublin, 75-76.
- DE PAOR L. 1987: The High Crosses of Tech Theille (Tihilly), Kinnitty, and Related Sculpture, in: Rynne E. (Ed.), *Figures from the Past*, Dun Laoighaire, 131-158.
- FANNING Th. 1994: *Viking Age Ringed Pins from Dublin*, Dublin.
- HARBISON P. 1991: *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, London.
- HARBISON P. 1992: *The High Crosses of Ireland*, 3 Vols, Bonn.
- HARBISON P. 1994: The Extent of Royal Patronage on Irish High Crosses, *Studia Celtica Japonica* 6, 77-105.
- HICKS C. 1980: A Clonmacnoise Workshop in Stone, *JRSAI* 110, 5-35.
- KING H.A. 1991: Clonmacnoise New Graveyard, Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1990*, Dublin, 49-50.
- KING H.A. 1992: Clonmacnoise New Graveyard, Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1991*, Dublin, 40-41.
- KING H.A. 1993a: Clonmacnoise New Graveyard, Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1992*, Dublin, 53-54.
- KING H.A. 1993b: St Kieran's National School, Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1992*, Dublin, 54.
- KING H.A. 1994a: Clonmacnoise High Crosses, *Excavations 1993*, Dublin, 66.
- KING H.A. 1994b: Clonmacnoise New Graveyard, Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1993*, Dublin, 66-67.
- KING H.A. 1994c: Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1993*, Dublin, 67.
- KING H.A. 1995a: Clonmacnoise High Crosses, *Excavations 1994*, Dublin, 74.

- KING H.A. 1995b: New Graveyard Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1994*, Dublin, 74-75.
- KING H.A. 1995c, Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1994*, Dublin, 75.
- KING H.A. 1996: New Graveyard Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1995*, Dublin, 76-77.
- MACALISTER R.A. Stewart 1909: *The Memorial Slabs of Clonmacnoise*, Dublin.
- MANNING C. 1986: Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1985*, Dublin, 33.
- MANNING C. 1990: Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1989*, Dublin, 43-44.
- MANNING C. 1991: Clonmacnoise, *Excavations 1990*, Dublin, 49.
- MANNING, Conleth, 1994a, *Clonmacnoise*. Dublin
- MANNING C. 1994b: The earliest plans of Clonmacnoise, *Archaeology Ireland* 8, No 1, Dublin, 18-20.
- MANNING C. 1995: Clonmacnoise Cathedral - The Oldest Church in Ireland, *Archaeology Ireland* 9, No. 4, 30-33.
- MOORE F. 1996: Ireland's Oldest Bridge - at Clonmacnoise, *Archaeology Ireland* 10, No 4, 24-27.
- O FLOINN R. 1995: Clonmacnoise: Art and Patronage in the Early Medieval Period, in: BOURKE & CORMAC (ed.), *From the Isles of the North*, HMSO, Belfast.
- O MURCHADHA D. 1980: Rubbings taken of the inscriptions on the Cross of the Scriptures, Clonmacnois, *JRSAI* 110, 47-51.
- O MURCHADHA D. & O MURCHU G. 1988: Fragmentary Inscriptions from the West Cross at Durrow, the South Cross at Clonmacnoise and the Cross of Kinnitty, *JRSAI* 118, 53-66.

Heather A. King
National Monuments Service
51 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2
Ireland

**02 DEATH AND BURIAL - DE WERELD VAN DE DOOD - LE MONDE DE LA MORT -
TOD UND BEGRÄBNIS**

Preface	5-6
Children - Les enfants - Die Kinder	
<i>Susi Ulrich-Bochsler</i> Jenseitsvorstellungen im Mittelalter: die Wiederbelebung von totgeborenen Kindern. Archäologische und anthropologische Untersuchungen im Marienwallfahrtszentrum von Oberbüren im Kanton Bern/Schweiz.	7-14
<i>Berit J. Sellevold</i> Children's skeletons and graves in Scandinavian archaeology.	15-25
Religion, ritual, representation and social status - Religion, rituels, représentation et position sociale - Religion, Rituale, Repräsentation und Soziale Gliederung	
<i>Sam Lucy</i> Reinterpreting Anglo-Saxon cemeteries.	27-32
<i>Andrew Reynolds</i> The definition and ideology of Anglo-Saxon execution sites and cemeteries.	33-41
<i>Thomas Meier</i> Inscriptentafeln aus mittelalterlichen Gräbern. Einige Thesen zur ihrer Aussagekraft.	43-53
<i>Torsten Lüdecke</i> The grave of archbishop Gottfried of Bremen (+ 1363) in Stade.	55-64
<i>Eugenijus Ivanauskas</i> Dead man's money in Lithuania.	65-66
<i>Christiane Prigent</i> L'empreinte de la mort sur le paysage paroissial en Bretagne.	67-70
<i>Johan Veeckman</i> Post-medieval burial practices in Antwerp, Belgium.	71-75
Archaeometry and pathology - Archéométrie et pathologie - Archäometrie und Pathologie	
<i>H. Bruchhaus & L. Finke</i> Zur Anthropologie mittelalterlicher Populationen im Mittel-Elbe-Saale-Gebiet.	77-84
<i>L. Finke, U. Dehmel, K. Klinkhardt & S. Nöther</i> Epigenetische Merkmale bei Bevölkerungsgruppen des frühen Mittelalters aus dem Mittel-Elbe-Saale-Gebietes.	85-91
<i>Rolf Heudorfer</i> Sharp blows on human skulls in an early medieval cemetery (Kirchheim/Rieß). Anthropological diagnosis and archaeological context.	93-95

*Life and death: site-related studies - La vie et la mort: sites et cas d'études -
Leben und Tod: Einzeluntersuchungen*

Christopher Scull

A cemetery of the 7th and 8th centuries at St. Stephen's Lane/Butter Market, Ipswich. 97-100

Stephen T. Driscoll

Exploring the Christian origins of Glasgow: excavations at Glasgow Cathedral and
Govan Old Parish church. 101-109

Michael Wyss

Saint-Denis (France) : du mausolée hypothétique du Bas-Empire à l'ensemble basilical. 111-114

N.C.W. Bateman

The early 11th- to mid-12th-century graveyard at Guildhall, City of London. 115-120

Simon Mays

Life and death in the medieval village. 121-125

Heather A. King

Burials and High Crosses at Clonmacnoise (Ireland) 127-131